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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

IT is pleasant to pass, as Mr. Chamberlain puts it, from "Bleak House" to "Great Expectations." But so far as his Budget is concerned, many will be disappointed in their expectations—or at least in their hopes. Its benefits are spread speciously, as we show in our leading article; those whose need is least get the most. In one point only is there ground for genuine satisfaction; the unemployment cuts are to be restored. It may be that the Chancellor intended all along to put that elementary measure of social justice first, though some of his Party were giving him other counsel. But in any case public opinion was overwhelming; it was expressed unmistakably in the forceful appeal of the Archbishop of York, in letters such as we had in abundance from our readers, in clubs and pubs and drawing rooms, in political meetings up and down the land. No Government not bent on suicide could have disregarded it. But is it not niggardly to defer this act of restitution till July 1st? The cost of dating it from May 1st would have been a mere bagatelle.

"Bleak House" in France

Whatever criticism it may incur here, the British budget is the envy of the French, who are faced with a huge deficit and the prospect of heavy sacrifices to meet it. The Government have succeeded in disposing of their first victims—the ex-service men, who are to suffer a 3 per cent. cut in their pensions. The civil servants' cuts are a more formidable business. The opposition is strong and widespread, and it is likely to become more intense. Nor is it unjustified; the civil servants—and many besides—argue that these economies at their expense will only help to lower the general purchasing power. And they ask why the Government do not take steps to prevent the evasion of income tax, which, as everyone knows, is practised on a gigantic scale in France. After the *fonctionnaires* it will be the turn of the railwaymen. The railways' total loss last year was something like 4,500 million francs, and the Government, on whom the liability falls, have drastic reforms up their sleeve, including more cuts of pay and pensions. All this, together with the high cost of living and the aftermath of the Stavisky affair, makes anxious days in France, alike for the Government and the citizens.

"Great Expectations" in Italy?

Italy, too, is in a financial pickle; but Signor Mussolini is not M. Doumergue, and he wastes no time over preliminaries. He merely announces a comprehensive programme of wage and salary cuts, together with price and rent reductions, all to come into force immediately—and it came, in fact, last Monday. Retail prices of foodstuffs are brought down by 10 per cent., rents of houses

by 12 per cent. and of shops and other buildings by 15 per cent. Cuts in the pay of State employees and members of the Government range from 6 to 20 per cent. The existing tax on bachelors, who are not favoured in Fascist Italy, is to be increased by 50 per cent. And it is believed that these drastic measures will be followed shortly by a general reduction of wages throughout the country. The result of it all, it is said, will be to help the export and tourist trades; while to set against the reduction of incomes, there is the fall in the cost of living, which has been very considerable in the last few years. Maybe it has; yet wages—real wages—have fallen too, and the miserable poverty of the masses of Italian workers was shown in an article published in our columns three or four weeks ago. It is evidently a far cry still from the Corporate State to the Promised Land.

The Disarmament Deadlock

Any lingering hopes of an accommodation in the disarmament quarrel were killed by the French Note published this week. The French Government give no answer to the question they were asked about the "guarantees of execution." They concentrate on Germany's flagrant contempt for the treaty, stress her warlike preparations, and declare roundly that she has made further negotiations impossible. The Germans' return to Geneva, they say, is the first condition of any Disarmament Convention. But here is a vicious circle; for the Germans will not return to Geneva until their demand for "equality" is satisfied—or until, at least, substantial concessions are made to their case. Their case cannot be dismissed as unreasonable, whatever may be thought of their methods. The attempts of the British Government to play the honest broker, without being willing to undertake any definite liabilities, were clearly doomed to failure. And now what is the General Commission of the Conference to do when it meets next month? In the present temper of France and Germany it is idle to expect disarmament, and the prospect of even an agreement on limitation seems remote. But some alternative must be found to the crime and folly of a new armaments race and European war.

A Ray of Light in India

Events in India have taken one of those sudden turns which, if the Government will only act wisely, might be the beginning of a new era in that unhappy country. It began with Mr. Gandhi's declaration that civil disobedience should be abandoned, or rather it really began some time before, when Mr. Gandhi, not without some opposition among his followers, succeeded in getting a large meeting at Patna to offer co-operation to the Government in the work of relief in Bihar. Now the Indian Government has responded by announcing that it will allow the All-India Congress Committee or, if the Congress leaders desire, the Congress itself, to meet in order to ratify Mr. Gandhi's policy and call off civil disobedience. If the meeting is held and the Government is satisfied on the subject of disobedience, "it will certainly review their policy towards Congress organisations." So far, so good; the olive branch appears to have been offered and accepted. But matters must not rest there. No permanent solution of the problem of Indian government can be found unless the Government pursues an active policy of reconciliation and co-operation with Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders. As the writer of a recent article in our columns pointed out, the fatal mistake of the National Government has been to treat Congress as "the enemy," and to refuse to deal with those who can deliver the goods. We do not know what the Committee of Privileges will say to Mr. Churchill's charges against the Secretary of State, but Sir Samuel Hoare's tactics have all along played into the hands of Mr. Churchill and his small but vocal band of Die-hards. The important point is not that the White Paper does not satisfy our Die-hards, but that it does not begin to satisfy those in India without whose collaboration no revised Constitution can be worked effectively.

An Imperial Danger

The spring offensive has started against the South African Protectorates. Sir Abe Bailey has fired the first shot, if he is correctly reported, and wants the Imperial Government to hand over the Protectorates of Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Basutoland to the Union. His motives are obvious. There is every indication that the Union Government will press for this transfer at the next Imperial Conference. Their motives are no less obvious. It is also likely that, unless a determined stand is made by the press and public of this country, the Government will succumb to pressure from South Africa. It has never yet resisted any determined pressure from the Dominions and there is no reason to suppose that it will do so in this case. It is true that we are under treaty obligations to the natives of these Protectorates, but such treaties appear to have no more and no less validity than other international documents, which have not always been honoured in the past. It is ominous that the phrase used in political circles is not that the natives will be asked for their consent before any such transfer, but that they will be given full opportunity to express their views. Had our own administration of these Protectorates been signalised by a greater regard for native interests, we might at least have insisted, as a condition of transfer, that the same high standard of inter-racial ethics should continue to be observed. Any suggestion such as this would fall very flat in view of the lamentable condition of the Protectorates, particularly of Bechuanaland, and the new welfare measures for natives of the Union which the Minister of Health announced at Capetown on April 17th as carried into effect, would make it even more impossible to oppose the transfer on the score of decent administration. So far as we can see only the transfer of the Protectorates from the Dominions to the Colonial Office would enable us to implement our treaty obligations and to keep faith with the natives.

Another Marketing Scheme

The Report of the Re-organisation Commission for Fat Stock, which is in fact wide enough to cover all live stock, carries Mr. Elliot's plans for the organisation of agriculture a stage farther. The Commission contemplates the replacement of the present "voluntary" regulation of meat imports by a compulsory system of quotas, designed to increase the British producers' proportion of the expanding home market. It wants to secure a rise in prices, especially the price of beef, and it proposes a rudimentary marketing scheme, with the intention that this shall be

followed up by more ambitious measures at a later stage. For the provision of finance it wants a levy on buyers of imported meat on the lines of the Wheat Act—a proposal which would involve the revision of a number of existing treaties. It urges the registration of meat auction centres, and a system by which producers would give notice of their intention to offer stock for sale, and would be registered as sellers at a particular centre. In fact, subject to differences of detail, the new scheme follows the general lines of earlier schemes under the Marketing Acts.

The Tithe Bill

The Tithe Bill, which passed its second reading in the House of Lords on Tuesday, seems to be a reasonable attempt to settle a very troublesome controversy. Obviously something must be done to stop the disorders that have been going on in the countryside, and obviously both tithe-payers and tithe-owners have a case. The Government's solution is a compromise which, while it eschews abolition, or even partial abolition, of tithe, gives substantial relief in hard cases, and also alters the procedure for recovery. The relief consists of a remission when tithe rent charges exceed two-fifths of the annual value of the land. The change of procedure enables tithe to be recovered in the county court, instead of, as now, only by distraint—which, of course, involves an important principle, for it means that tithe will be put on the footing of an ordinary personal debt. That will be a clear advantage to the tithe-owner, and it will also, as the Lord Chancellor declared, make for the maintenance of law and order. The tithe-payers—or at least their extremer champions—demur to it; but it is difficult to see how it will do them any real injustice.

Marriage in the Police Court

The object of the Summary Jurisdiction (Domestic Procedure) Bill, introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Listowel, is to provide for the hearing of separation and maintenance cases—some 24,000 annually—under a special domestic procedure, based on conciliation rather than litigation. It endeavours to ensure that the bench shall include magistrates (among them women) who have general qualifications as well as legal knowledge; it simplifies the rules of evidence for such cases and introduces a new voluntary "conciliation summons." The restrictions on reporting which now apply to divorce cases would also be applied to these "domestic cases." The Bill would in fact give legal form to the practice of the more enlightened magistrates who have long been doing their best to separate the hearing of domestic cases from other police-court work. One of these, Mr. Claud Mullins, has forcibly explained the need for reform in his book, *Marriage, Children, and God* (Allen & Unwin, 6*s*.) These cases are delicate and difficult. They involve, absurdly enough, sentencing thousands of people to a condition in which they cannot remarry and, incidentally, sending more than 4,000 men to prison annually in default of payment of maintenance. Yet they are at present sandwiched in among trivialities about road obstruction, rear lights and street football, and are heard in courts crowded with sightseers and haunted by reporters on the look-out for titillating scraps. In these circumstances the facts are frequently withheld by sensitive witnesses; orders are made which would not be asked for if the disputes were understandingly considered and other orders which may be urgently needed are refused by the court, which has no opportunity of learning what lies behind the application.

The Forty Hour Week

The International Labour Office has issued this week the draft for the Convention on Hours of Work whose fate is to be decided at this year's Conference. Broadly, the draft provides for an average working week of forty hours, with a number of special exemptions, and provision for overtime up to sixty hours during the year. There is no reference in the draft Convention to the maintenance of wages in face of the proposed reduction in hours; but it is suggested that there should be passed at the same time a recommendation to Governments to take all measures that may be needed to prevent the reduction in hours from reacting on the standard of living. It is admittedly difficult to draft a Convention dealing with wages; but the practical value of a vaguely worded recommendation of this sort is open to doubt. Nevertheless, it is well worth while to get the Convention adopted, if that can be done; but it is more than likely that the whole project will again be shelved. The British Government have so far been hostile, and presumably the Germans and Japanese will refuse to come in. The United States might now agree; but there are constitutional difficulties in the way. The French and Italians as well as a number of the smaller States have been favourable, but will certainly not act without Great Britain.

The B.B.C.

The *Listener* has replied officially to certain criticisms which we made of the B.B.C. in a recent leading article. We said that it had steadily decreased the amount of really first-class music in its programmes, and we made it quite clear that we were referring to the evening programmes, which, after all, are the only ones which the ordinary occupied person has a chance of listening to. The *Listener* proposes to convict us of inaccuracy by detailing music broadcast in the week ending April 7th, and includes music broadcast before 7 o'clock and at least eleven works with no pretensions of being "really first class." We were referring to the major works of the major composers; our statement cannot be refuted by telling us that the B.B.C. broadcast the "Fledermaus" and Mr. Ireland. Nor can our criticism of the B.B.C. for not allowing Mr. Churchill to broadcast be met by the rather disingenuous statement that Mr. Churchill is allowed to broadcast; it is notorious that he was not allowed to broadcast his views on a "controversial" subject at a moment when it was important that those views—with which we are in complete disagreement—should be understood and discussed. Exactly the same applies to the hunger marchers and people like Mr. Ferrie. As regards the subtler question of class bias, which is also dealt with by a correspondent who criticises our statements, it is by imposing on speakers particular views with regard to "presentation and arrangement," to quote the *Listener*, and "relevance," to quote our correspondent, that that bias can be, and is, very effectively given to British broadcasting.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 *Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.*2. *The postage on this issue is: Inland,* 1*d.; Foreign,* 1½*d.; Canada,* 1*d.*

RICH MAN, POOR MAN

OUT of an estimated surplus of £29,000,000, Mr. Chamberlain has presented the payers of income tax with £20,500,000—or with £24,000,000 in a full year. Sixpence off income tax is, in fact, the outstanding provision of the new Budget; and all the rest is really secondary to that. Rates of unemployment benefit are, indeed, put back to the pre-1931 level; but the greater part of the cost of this concession falls on the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and the charge for transitional benefit, which alone falls on the Exchequer, is only £3,600,000, or under £5,000,000 in a full year. Civil servants, teachers, and the other public employees whose wages and salaries were cut in 1931 get back only half the amounts which they lost, whereas income tax is restored to the pre-crisis level, except for certain of the small tax-payers who were penalised in 1931. Finally, motorists get a reduction in horse-power tax, which means especially a saving to the richer motorist; but the tax on petrol stays where it was.

The best that can be said for Mr. Chamberlain's Budget is that it is, as he claims, a clear sign of reviving business activity. Indeed, his estimates certainly fail to take credit for the full amount of the current improvement. There is hardly any doubt that his estimated surplus of £29,000,000 is considerably below what can really be expected, if present tendencies continue in force during the next twelve months. It is therefore pertinent to inquire what has induced the Chancellor to put forward so cautious a revenue forecast. Two explanations at once suggest themselves. The first is that Mr. Chamberlain, encountering too much opposition to the proposal to restore the full amount of the Sinking Fund, means to secure the same result by an alternative method—that is, by building up a large revenue surplus, which will be applied automatically to debt reduction at the end of the financial year, and will also create a favourable atmosphere for next year's Budget.

The second explanation is that he expects during the present financial year to have to meet supplementary expenditure which does not appear in the Budget statements. If this is so, what he probably has in mind is not the American debt, for which again no provision is made, but rather additional military expenditure if the Disarmament Conference finally breaks down. Most likely he has had both these considerations in mind; at all events it is incontestable that he has chosen to put the prospective revenue, just as he did last year, considerably lower than most people expect it actually to be.

Of course, if Mr. Chamberlain had made his surplus out to be larger than he has he would have been hard put to it to find any defence at all for refusing to restore in full the wage and salary cuts of 1931. To restore half these cuts costs him £7,600,000, and presumably full restoration would cost twice as much. We feel no doubt that this could be afforded, even with income tax back at 4*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. But Mr. Chamberlain presumably wants to keep the restoration of the remaining half for next year, as a bar against being asked for other concessions; for if in 1935 he gives it back with a flourish, he will be able to claim this further benefit to the poor as an offset to further charges in the interests of the richer taxpayers. With this in mind, he is prepared to risk the present wrath of civil servants, teachers, policemen, soldiers, sailors and airmen, in the hope that, having got something, which is much better than nothing, they will not be so very angry after all. In this we think he is making a mistake; for the discrepancy between the sum granted to the payers of income tax and the rest of the Budget concessions is too glaring not to rouse resentment in the minds of those who have been sacrificed to the interests of the payers of income tax.

The restoration of the standard rate of unemployment benefit, and of the maximum payable as transitional benefit, to the 1931 level is a matter for rejoicing, and it sounds like an act of full justice. But it must be borne in mind that the increase in the rates of benefit falls very far short of putting the unemployed back to the position which they occupied in 1931. For the Means Test remains, and the Means Test, far more than the reduced rates of benefit, was the great "economy" carried out at the expense of the unemployed in the stress of the crisis. It is gratifying that the number of workers out of a job has been substantially reduced, and that the Chancellor is able to anticipate a further reduction. But merely to give back to the agencies responsible for administering unemployment benefits the power to grant allowances up to the pre-crisis level by no means gives back to the unemployed what they lost in 1931. Mr. Chamberlain will doubtless contend that the Means Test was not an emergency measure but a necessary permanent reform; but it is a reform—as we hold, misguided and unfair in its effects—which could not have been made except under cover of the financial crisis.

Nor must it be forgotten that, also as a result of the crisis, Great Britain, by becoming a high tariff country, has shifted large additional burdens on to the payers of indirect taxes, which are admittedly regressive in their incidence. A great deal has been said and written about the hardships of the direct taxpayers, and Mr. Chamberlain has even lent colour to the fantastic suggestion that the *rentiers* ought to be compensated by lower taxes for the fall in interest rates—as if five per cent. for ever were a sacred right of the bondholder. Nothing has been said of the case for compensating the housewife who is being taxed indirectly by means of tariffs and restriction schemes deliberately designed to raise or maintain the prices of foodstuffs and other consumable goods. Yet by these means a large share in total taxation has undoubtedly been shifted since 1931 on to the shoulders of the poorer classes. This year, income tax and surtax are estimated to yield together under £270,000,000, whereas Custom and Excise together are put at £290,000,000. These two figures measure the degree of shift from progressive to regressive taxation which has occurred under cover of the financial emergency.

Two further points must not be left out of account. Mr. Chamberlain has rejected the advice of the Royal Commission that he should remit part at least of the existing debt of the Insurance Fund, though he had, in view of last year's surplus, an admirable opportunity of achieving this. Secondly, apart from restoring the cuts, he has contributed nothing to the removal of the policy of "economy" in the social services, which are still left to bear the burden of the retrenchments enforced under plea of the national emergency. Yet an expansion of

social services is certainly far more urgent than a reduction in the tax on motor cars; for we are quite unable to accept the plea that this is important in the interests of the export trade. It is more likely to cause Britons to buy more foreign cars—unless Mr. Chamberlain raises the tariff on them—than to persuade foreigners to buy more British cars.

So much for the case against Mr. Chamberlain's Budget. It is a strong case; for this is undoubtedly a Budget that favours the rich at the expense of the poor. What is to be said on the other side is less in praise of the Budget than in gratification that economic conditions have improved enough to make it possible. That there should be in prospect a surplus which the Chancellor puts at £30,000,000, and most other authorities at a good deal more, is a very comfortable state of affairs in comparison with the position in most other countries. But this "healthy" condition of the public finances has been bought at a high cost—at the expense of the unemployed, the employees of the nation, the school children as well as the teachers, the married couples vainly seeking houses to rent, and many other deserving sections of the community. It has been secured by resort to regressive methods of taxation, and by vexatious petty economies of many kinds; and, even so, it depends for the success which has been achieved on the movement towards general world recovery, for which President Roosevelt far more than Mr. Chamberlain deserves the praise. In relation to the events of the past few years, Mr. Chamberlain has been fortunate in his opportunity; his use of it has been none too happy. Though he has made a show of fairness in distributing his blessings, the fairness dissolves under analysis of the real incidence of the new tax system built up on a tariff basis.

NEW DEAL AND OLD MASTERS

AMERICA has been recovering rather noisily for a year and a month, and she has not yet recovered. We had keyed up our attention in the early phases of this process to watch a rushing, dramatic "movie," in which prosperity would be attained by the rapid increase of wages, an ambitious programme of public works and the lifting of the price level. But the "movie" slowed down, and in its place we were invited to study an interminable serial. The short range objective of recovery lost its attraction as it receded in time; a much larger and more difficult aim had taken its place and absorbed it. The President is trying to transform the *laissez-faire* capitalism of his Continent into a permanent system of planning and control.

For a short-range effort his power seemed adequate. The panic that set in with the collapse of the banks induced Congress to invest him with quasi-dictatorial authority. He used it boldly and promptly enough, yet in retrospect one wonders not that he did so much but rather that he was content with such very moderate reforms. The banks, in the anxious days that followed his inauguration, when the whole country rocked on the edge of ruin, had no partisans: he could have nationalised both them and the railways, or at least welded them into controlled public services. Wall Street had no friends—or at least its friends were shamed into silence: he could have created some form of control over investment that would have directed its flow into channels that suited his plan. He missed his chance of doing these two things and as one watches the temper of Congress one doubts whether it will recur. It is obvious that much of his difficulty in achieving the short-range purpose of recovery springs from the fact that he has no adequate command over the flow of capital, in the form of either bank credit or of loans. The financing of building and of the industries that make capital goods halts amid the general uncertainty, and the millions of men who should be busy in these trades remain unemployed.

The framework, then, of any permanent system of control still largely awaits construction: as yet there is only a partial and hastily improvised scaffolding. But there are ominous signs that the President no longer wields the irresistible moral authority that he enjoyed in the first months of his period of office. Congress has broken away from him, and both its Houses have conspired to break his veto, and have burdened his Budget with charges that he was determined to avoid. It is probable enough that legislators, getting ready for the elections of next November, were merely responding to popular pressure. For one of these two additions to federal expenditure they had, none the less, a very good case. There was a baffling lack of logic in the conduct of a President whose first aim was to raise the purchasing power of the masses, when he none the less cut the pay and reduced the numbers of civil servants, more especially in the lower ranks of the Post Office. Congress had a sound economic case when it insisted on a return to the former levels of pay. There was less to be said for the bonus paid to ex-soldiers of the Great War but even for this vote-catching extravagance (as the orthodox see it) there was this to be said: that as yet the State had failed to make proper provision for the unemployed. In so far as these men are still without work, as great numbers of them are, there was some excuse for this rather reckless and unconstructive form of relief. A case could be made for it, however, only because the pivotal measure of the President's programme, the scheme of National Public Works, has failed as yet to materialise. It is much too soon to say, on the basis of a single incident, that his almost unprecedented command over Congress is at an end. He is still popular: he has for the audiences that listen to him on the wireless all his old magic. But he has not brought more than a partial recovery, and the more intelligent half of the public knows that in other countries, without heroic remedies or painful reforms, re-recovery in something like the same measure has come by the mere swing of the pendulum.

Two contrary movements of opinion seem to follow this discovery. Some doubt the necessity for any New Deal: others call out for much more drastic remedies. It is this latter tendency that explains the affection of the Senate for its highly inflationary Silver Bill. The prices of farm produce lag persistently behind those of industrial goods, and seem to defy all the attempts of the Administration to raise them by restricting supply: the failure here opens the road to the advocates of inflation. We shall soon know whether the President can deal with this awkward confusion of his plans; and whether he will get authority to use the Tariff single-handed as an instrument of negotiation. He is much the adroitest leader that America has produced in our lifetime, and he may win through. But enough has happened to revive the doubts with which one watched the inception of his experiment. Can a constitution of this type with all its checks and balances, all its jealous obstacles to rapid action and bold leadership, be adapted to the needs of a planned economy? And even if a master of political technique can so use it, would it serve in the hands of the average President?

When one turns from these political difficulties to the actual achievement, doubt hardens to complete scepticism. The problem of power has not been solved. This dynamic President, with his revivalist methods of mobilising public opinion, has indeed created a system of control. But he has neither altered the balance of power within the industrial system, nor has he imposed upon it a check from above powerful enough to transform the ordinary motives and procedure of capitalism. The conception of the New Deal has never been defined in sufficiently precise language. But it seemed to proceed on the belief that Prosperity was dissipated because

the owners of industry assigned to themselves inordinate profits, used them to expand the productive capacity of their machines, and then confronted a starved and inelastic market, that could not absorb the ever-rising flood of goods, because its total purchasing power had not risen in due proportion. That is the rather vague diagnosis to be found in the speeches of the President, and rather more clearly in those of his able Secretary for Agriculture, Mr. Wallace. The problem then was, on this showing, (*a*) to limit profits, and to raise, relatively to profits, the total wages bill, and (*b*) outside industry, to raise the consuming power of the farm population, by bringing its prices into line with those of manufacture. In the early days, when General Johnson was bullying the captains of industry to adopt more liberal "codes of fair competition," there was much to rejoice over. Child labour was eliminated up to the age of sixteen. The minimum wages prescribed and the maximum hours certainly meant relief for the worse-paid grades in the most cruelly sweated trades. The shorter week promised a bigger total wage bill, and higher purchasing power. The effect on the trades that make consumers' goods was soon evident, and some of them attained normal activity.

After this first impetus, however, the defects of the whole system became obvious. What in effect had happened was that the State had suspended the operation of the Anti-Trust Laws, and had itself compelled every industry to organise itself as a gigantic price ring. By organised moral pressure within its own ranks prices were forced up to a uniform level, which had no relation to the costings of individual firms. Over the greater part of industry competitive prices ceased to exist. A minimum wage had indeed been fixed, but above that the actual rates were subject to negotiation. At first it seemed that under a friendly Administration, with public opinion behind them, the often moribund Trade Unions of the American Federation of Labour would revive, and they did in fact greatly increase their membership. But if they grew, the sham company unions grew five times faster. Again and again, now in conflict with the Steel Trust and again with the automobile industry, the Administration had its chance of vindicating the men's right of combination. Always it preferred to smooth and compromise: always it evaded in its adroit settlements the main issue. One cannot say that as yet the battle is irreparably lost. The passage of the Wagner Bill, defining the right of combination, might still affect the issue. But up to date the broad fact is that combination among wage-earners plays no effective part in determining wages. The immense mass of American workers are organised, if at all, in sham unions, which the employer creates, controls and finances. He negotiates, therefore, over wages with himself.

This is the background of the situation on which the Consumers' Council has issued its devastating report. Industrial wholesale prices are shooting up far beyond the level at which the President aimed—the level of 1926—and they are rising out of all proportion to wages. The result must be, it predicts, that when in due course these wholesale prices are reflected in retail trade, consumption will decline, hands will be dismissed, and the spiral of deflation will start afresh. This is sufficiently disturbing, but the case is actually worse, since agriculture shows no such rise in prices. Over the so-called "open price" industries (where prices are in fact fixed by internal pressure) the index as compared with 100 in 1926 stands at 111, and these cover more than half the industrial field. Farm products show an index of 55.

That a planned economy should show no miracle of order after only half a year's trial is not surprising. What is alarming, what seems to mean final defeat, is that the problem of power has not been faced. Gather the captains of an industry together, place in their hands the power of organised control, leave the consumers impotent, regiment the workers under their paymasters' whip, and would any sane being expect a different result? Industry is still organised for maximum profit. It can now fix prices at levels that leave to the weaker concerns a sufficient and to the stronger an inordinate profit. There is no change in the distribution of the proceeds of industry, and no reason to anticipate a change, while power rests in the old hands, and motives act as before. The New Deal is as yet an aspiration which has not ordered its forces for the indispensable struggle.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

A DANGEROUS MEASURE

NOTHING in the speeches of the Law Officers of the Crown will quiet the doubts of those who view with grave concern the new Incitement to Disaffection Bill. There was no evidence of any new danger. There was no suggestion that the present law was inadequate to cope with any real incitement. Nor was there any attempt even to understand why one further attack on personal freedom, to-day so violently and widely assaulted on every hand, should arouse deep disquiet among those who still regard it as important.

The Attorney-General repudiated Professor Laski's criticism of the Bill as badly drafted. But he did not even try to meet the gravamen of the attack upon it which he and others have made. These are substantial enough. The Bill makes it an offence to be in possession of seditious documents relating to incitement of troops "without lawful excuse." That is both a new offence and a new principle of English law. Hitherto, offence has lain in publication and not in possession; and the onus of proof is, by this clause, laid on the defendant instead of on the prosecution. The Bill does not define "lawful excuse"; and it is easy to see how difficult it is to interpret the phrase and what chances it provides for the creation of prejudice.

It is, moreover, an offence under the Bill to do any act preparatory to the commission of an offence. Again, no definition of any sort is provided. Would it be such an act for members of the League of Nations Union to organise a campaign at York against preparations for war? Or, as a body of well-known lawyers have urged, to buy a ticket for Aldershot? Anyone can see how, under this clause, the door is opened to the prosecution to use acts in themselves quite harmless for ends in fact quite remote from their intention.

The Bill, again, widely extends the present powers of search possessed by the police. By swearing that they have reason to suspect the possession of seditious literature by *X*, they can obtain a warrant from a magistrate to conduct a general search for papers, if necessary by force. And, in the light of Mr. Justice Horridge's decision in the recent Hannington case, they could use that occasion to seize any documents they happened to come across upon which a charge might be built. This is, in fact, to introduce a general search warrant, denied ever since Camden's famous decision in 1765, by the back door. And, granted the general habits of the police, it is difficult not to believe that such a power will be used as the basis of a roving commission to investigate extremist organisations whenever the authorities, as with the hunger marchers, are alarmed by their progress. This is no way to safeguard the liberty of the subject. Nor is it a defence, as the Solicitor-General tried to argue, to say that there are already Acts on the Statute-book, in such matters as stolen goods or the White Slave Traffic, in which, for very specific purposes, Parliament has already conferred a power of search. The Law Officers must be perfectly well aware of the great abyss which separates the existing type of search warrant from the general authority it is now proposed to create.

One final danger in the Bill must be noted. Whenever, under its provisions, the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for the charge, he may insist upon the committal of the prisoner to trial by the High Court. It is, again, a new principle of our law to make an executive official's discretion the basis upon which the fate of the prisoner, acquittal apart, is decided. The operation of this principle means, in effect, an announcement by the Director to the Court which will later try the case that he regards the particular offence as serious. It is, in short, bound to operate to the detriment

of the accused by announcing to the jury, by the mere fact that the discretion has been invoked by the Director, that the authorities view the alleged offence with particular gravity. There could hardly be a worse way of beginning what is by its very nature a political trial.

Everyone agrees that the army and navy should be protected against deliberate incitements to mutiny; but no one has hitherto supposed that the existing statutory provisions are not ample to this end. The law officers did not produce an atom of evidence which suggested the need for new powers. The pamphlets and journals to which they referred were not new; they did not argue that any single soldier or sailor had been seduced from his allegiance by them. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the real purposes of this Bill are, first, to give the police a power of search which, on Common Law principles, the judges have always regarded with aversion, and, second, to give the Government new weapons against "extremist" political organisations. All the historic objections to the first purpose remain; and of the second it is, unfortunately, still necessary to remind the Government that what makes "extremist" organisations dangerous is not the creation of new offences but the existence of deeply felt grievances. A government which respected the need for freedom would seek to remove the second instead of multiplying the first.

A LONDON DIARY

I REMEMBER years ago arguing with a Hegelian philosopher who had become a Communist. When it was pointed out to him that his theory was in contradiction with the facts he replied: "The facts do not matter." I've been reminded of this incident by recent conversations with ardent supporters of the Nazi regime. In each case the speaker has been exalted with a religious enthusiasm, expressing himself with what is usually called passionate sincerity. The phrase is apt, if it covers a state of naive emotionalism which renders the speaker quite certain of the truth of what he is saying and quite incapable of self-criticism. Of the more difficult sincerity that comes from challenging one's mental concepts and testing one's conclusions by the facts before allowing oneself to be convinced, I've come across no trace in any Nazi apologia. The first apologist explained that it was no use thinking of the Nazi movement in economic terms. It was spiritual. It was a sense of unity: as a writer it gave him a certainty in which he could work. He had thought out a great scheme of social reform for Germany: he had sent it to the authorities: they had approved, but said that, for the moment, Germany must concentrate on the problem of power. . . . In four years' time, perhaps, his schemes could be put into practice. He was quite satisfied with that. It was not a time to think and criticise: it was a time to feel and do. He could work happily now for half the pay he used to get. Sometimes he did find the Totalitarian State too much for him. It was only the very young who could easily give up their individuality. He therefore kept some contacts abroad and came away from time to time in order, he said, that he could "feel that he was still a man."

* * *

The second apologist was younger. He was concerned to prove that the Nazis were not at all like Italian Fascists, that the movement was "peasant" in origin, and anti-industrial—he began to say "anti-property," but withdrew: it was not "imperialistic," since it did not contemplate war or aim at conquering or ruling over any except Germans. It merely wanted to unite in a single State all members of the German race, whether they lived in Schleswig or in the Russian Ukraine. (He did not say how this was to be accomplished without war.) The Nazis were "in love with England," because, he said, they knew that England was "fundamentally good." A little later he said that England was decadent, and that it was only the "sound core" that the Nazis loved. He was particularly eloquent about the "mystic sense of unity" in Germany, and he apologised for certain excesses—though they were grossly exaggerated—and for the clumsiness of German foreign policy. Now when I'm told that I'm not just to Nazi Germany, I think of this young man, of his obvious friendliness and enthusiasm, and I'm not inclined to scoff. I know that his idealism is widespread among the younger S.A. men and among supporters who are not members of the Nazi Party. But I must judge a movement by its centre of power, not by its periphery of well-intentioned enthusiasts. How long can these young men and women sustain their idealism in face of the glaring contradiction of the facts? Anti-industrialist? Why, Hitler's reply has been to appoint a board of industrialists to dictate the economic life of Germany. The German race? Has the phrase any meaning? Why apologise for the cruelties and excesses when the essence of the technique by which the Nazis won power was the deliberate cultivation of terrorism? As for the "clumsy" foreign policy, it is the strength of the regime. To repudiate peace sentiments and to prepare for war and reconquest have been the avowed objects of the leaders since the movement began. (If anyone wants to know what the children are being taught as history, let them look, for example, at a newly published pamphlet, *A Nazi School History Text Book*, with a Foreword by Professor Ernest Barker, issued by the Friends of Europe.) How long can this contradiction of fact and ideal last? Can my young, likable, yellow-headed mystical Nordic go on for ever supporting a movement run by Göring and Thyssen, the armament king? The contradiction is so glaring that some note signs of disillusion in the S.A. and prophesy a struggle in Germany between the idealists and the rulers. That may come. But the chances of exploiting mysticism appear to me almost endless. If I were Goebbels I would not worry much. From "being in love" to being in hate is an easy stage, and war is the easiest of all atmospheres in which to cultivate "the mystic sense of unity."

* * *

That, I found, was the opinion of a well-known and very detached German professor who talked to me about his Nazi students. He was full of affection for them, but despaired for their future. I asked him whom he blamed for the final disaster. He answered, "The Communists." He admitted the mistakes of the Social Democratic leaders and the damage done by the policy of the "lesser-evil"—the policy of coalescing with one's opponents in order to keep out one's more rabid enemies. But it was forced on the Social Democrats, in his view, by the Communists, who would make no concessions, could not possibly combine with other working-class leaders and who, instead of organising against the common enemy, spent all their fire attacking the Social Democrats, driving them willy-nilly into the arms of reaction. This same—I think mad—tactic continues from Moscow to-day. The Communist abuse in the press and on the wireless of Otto Bauer and other Austrian leaders is surely the height of folly. The Austrian leaders were not afraid; they put off armed resistance in Vienna until the last minute, because it seemed to them to have no chance in the absence of foreign help, and to have begun a rising from the workers' side would have destroyed that one hope. They may have made an error in judgment in even hoping for help from England or France: they perhaps did not realise the full villainy of Mussolini who, it now seems, promised Dollfuss help against the Nazis on condition that he destroyed the Social Democrats. But a Socialist rising, before there was indubitable provocation from the Heimwehr, would have been equally futile and much less easy to justify.

* * *

Moscow seems incapable of learning the lesson of Germany, but the idea of a united front against Fascism is still possible and is making real headway in France. On March 11th there appeared simultaneously in *Le Peuple*, the organ of the French Trades Unions, and in *l'Humanité*, the Communist paper, a manifesto addressed to the workers, which was

reproduced the next day by the Socialist *Populaire*. Originally there were seventy-five signatures to this manifesto, now there are more than a thousand—scientists, engineers, doctors, professors, schoolmasters, writers, artists, and students. Among the scientists are some of the most distinguished in France, the physicists, Jean Perrin (Nobel Prize), and Georges Urbain, the mathematician, Jacques Hadamard, the anthropologist, Lévy-Bruhl (these four, all members of the Institute), M. and Mme. Joliot-Curie, the physicist, Paul Langevin, and Paul Rivet, head of the Paris Natural History Museum. It was the two last-named, together with Alain, the essayist, who initiated the scheme. Among the writers who have signed are Julien Benda, Ramon Fernandez, J. R. Bloch and André Gide; among the doctors, several members of the Academy of Medicine and professors at the Paris Faculty; among the engineers a great many old pupils of the famous *Ecole Polytechnique* (the Woolwich of France), and finally, a very large number of students at the universities, and especially at the *Ecole Normale*. The text of the manifesto is as follows:

> The Fascist riots in Paris and the resistance they excited in the working classes have brought us together in a wish to assure all the workers, our fellows, of our determination to stand beside them in the struggle to save the rights and liberties of the people from a Fascist dictatorship. We are prepared for every sacrifice to prevent the subjugation of France to a regime of oppression, poverty and militarism. We repudiate the squalid corruption revealed by the recent scandals, we shall fight against corruption, we shall also fight against hypocrisy. We are determined to prevent a financial oligarchy of banks, trusts and armament manufacturers from making use of the indignation aroused by these scandals in order, as in Germany, to destroy the Republic. It is our business not to preserve the present conditions, but to transform the State and free it from the tyranny of big capitalists. We wish to act in the closest co-operation with the workers, and our first step has been to form a committee of vigilance, which we place at the disposal of the working-class organisations.

This appeal, made by the intellectuals, received an immediate response both from the Socialist and Communist Trades Unions. The practical proposals are firstly to keep under observation Fascist activities, so as to be prepared against a *putsch*, and secondly to counteract Fascist propaganda, especially among the peasants, the *petits bourgeois* and the unemployed, by publishing simple pamphlets about Fascist methods and the real condition of the lower and middle classes in Fascist countries.

* * *

Speaking of Communist tactics, I see that the widely reported statement that Severing, late head of the Prussian police, is preparing a book on "his way to Hitler," originated in a Communist newspaper, and that it is probably untrue. According to the Vienna press, the statement, apparently designed to rub in the view that all Social Democrats are necessarily traitors to the working classes, appeared in the Communist *Deutsche Volkszeitung* in Saarbrücken on March 15th. The story was taken up by Swiss papers and soon quoted with the appropriate twist in papers of all sorts. Challenged, the *Deutsche Volkszeitung* has stated (in a very inconspicuous position) that it invented the story as *ein Aprilscherz*—an April-fool joke. A bad reason for telling lies on March 15th.

* * *

I've not seen any public announcement of Mr. H. D. Henderson's new appointment. When I first knew Henderson he was an Economics don at Cambridge; he left to become editor of the *Nation*. In 1930, he was made Secretary to the Economic Advisory Council, appointed by Mr. MacDonald, then Labour Prime Minister. It must have been a disheartening job giving economic advice to either of the last two Governments, and I congratulate Mr. Henderson on his appointment to a Research Fellowship at All Souls, Oxford. Oxford usually has to go to Cambridge for its economists.

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Being still afflicted with neuritis, I am attracted by a press advertisement which says:

> Bask in sunshine with the right people at the ——— Hotel, Torquay.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Readers are invited to send us cuttings suitable for inclusion in this column. Address: 10 Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

People said war was cruel. So were medical men. They did the same thing that the soldier did in the war—that was to say, they carried out drastically cruel actions in order to produce ultimate final good; it was the only way of doing it . . .

People said that in war the innocent suffered for the guilty. Was not that what happened on our roads? He saw a statement in the papers that as many people had been killed on the roads as were killed in the Boer War or even in the Napoleonic Wars. People did not therefore say motor cars were wrong . . .

There were those who said that a soldier ought to be called upon to lay down his arms when his country demanded his services. *As a Christian minister, he said that those people ought to be shot at sight.*—From the press report of a sermon by Canon Tredennick, vicar of Christ Church, Sparkbrook.

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Sir J. Pybus (Harwich L. Nat.) said that misunderstandings had occurred as to what was really intended in the (Firearms Act, 1920, Amendment) Bill, but he hoped that by now they had been set at rest. Several members had spoken or written to him under the impression that the Bill sought *to impose a new restriction on English family life and on the enjoyment of the countryside*, but this was not so. The Bill made no change in the law as far as the possession, use, giving or lending of firearms was concerned.—*Times*.

"I have lent Fulham approximately £44,000," Mr. Dean said, "and I am entitled to the maximum 7½ per cent. dividend allowed by the F.A., but I take only 4 per cent., because I am in football for sport, not gain."—*Star*.

With remarkable appropriateness there have been hung in this room two of the four ladies of Charles II by Sir Peter Lely. . . . In their present surroundings they may be regarded as hostages of a pleasing kind, conducive to friendly international relations.—*Times*.

Romance is in the air at Ramsgate. It is the year of the town's charter jubilee, and at the dinner of the Chamber of Commerce the Mayor, Alderman E. E. Dye, referred to the romance of the past, which is to be re-enacted at a pageant in Ellington Park by 4,000 performers in July. . . . The president, Mr. H. C. Flowerdew, spoke of the romance of the present. He said the fact that many couples returned year by year to Ramsgate, accompanied by their families, proved that courtship by the sea had led to many happy marriages.

He attributed it to a special quality in the Ramsgate air which stimulated enduring affection.—*Evening Standard*.

THE OLD PRISON

"(OR the Old Prison House)." Thus a Sunday-paper advertisement announced the alternative name of a house now for sale—a house in which I once lived. I do not know what kind of prisoners were kept there, or what were their punishments within those thick walls: it was a house that had outlived dynasties, but most of the evil in its history had been forgotten. There was an owl that lived between the ceiling of the top room and the roof and that stumbled noisily about among the rafters in the small hours like the ghost of a captive in medieval armour, and there was a cook for a brief season who made us feel that we were living under the thumb of a gaoler, sending us up uneatable dishes that we dared not leave uneaten. The cook certainly frightened us: we suspected her, indeed, of being a dangerous criminal of the male sex disguised and on the run: that, however, may have been the effect of her dishes on the imagination. Apart from the owl and the cook, the shades of the prison-house had been dissipated by time.

Never till I went to live in the house had I lived in the country all the year round. The country till then had been to me a place of long summer visits, of occasional Christmas or Easter holidays, of idle walks on Saturdays and Sundays.

The custom of closing the schools in the second half of summer may have something to be said for it, but it has this disadvantage that the town child grows up, as a rule, without much chance of becoming intimate with the country in the full bloom and variety of the year. August is a fine month, but May and June are finer. If it is good for boys and girls to leave off learning Latin and Greek for long spells, it would surely be best that they should do this when the trees are full of singing birds and the nests are full of eggs and the whole world is a garden. For myself, even as a boy, I knew the song of the yellow-hammer, for he sang through the summer; and in town, as I lay awake at dawn, I could listen to half the birds from Noah's Ark singing in the garden. But most of the common birds I could not have identified either by eye or by ear, and I was no more learned about flowers or even about trees. I was a child of the streets, not of the fields, and I had all but settled down into the condition of a lifelong ignoramus when I went to live at the Old Prison House.

I am, no doubt, still an ignoramus: I can never go deep into botany and ornithology. But at least I have spent days and weeks and months in the country, and have sat under my own sycamore—at a reasonable rent—listening to the willow-wren. I do not know who had planted the sycamore in the centre of the one little square of green lawn in the garden behind the house. It was an insane thing to do, as the sycamore is one of the few trees under which it uncomfortable to sit. It is a charming tree at the time of its first flowering, but no sooner has one begun to think so than it begins to drop a gentle rain, sticky as honey, on everybody and everything under its branches. At the same time, this sycamore was the most beautiful of all sycamores: it was lit up by the presence of a bird and a song so enchanting that, as one watched and listened, one could almost have believed that the miseries of mankind were an illusion. I do not think that, before that time, I could have recognised a willow-wren; but to lie in a hammock and to be sung to by one, sunny morning after sunny morning, was to be convinced that, of all the birds that visit these islands, the willow-wren's song is the loveliest. He himself is as graceful as his song: he is the very spirit of the leaves and the sunlight that is scattered through them. He is brief: he is repetitive; but what a perfect shape of song! Till then, I had thought of him as a comparatively rare bird. When I left my hammock, however, and wandered day after day among the hollows of the downs, I realised that he must be one of the commonest birds in England—as common almost as the chaffinch. If I had not gone to live in the country I should never have known this. I should have heard the first willow-wren singing in the garden at Hampstead without excitement, for it is an odd fact that one becomes most excited about the songs of birds that one can name. There is an entrancement of discovery, but the entrancement is not complete till it has been fixed in a word, a name, that will remain in the memory. To remember having heard an unknown bird singing exquisitely does not give us the same pleasure as to remember having heard a definite bird—a willow-wren, a wren, a blackbird, or a nightingale—singing exquisitely. Savages attribute a magic influence to names. They believe that to know a child's name is to possess power over it. Whether or not it is the possessive instinct in us that is gratified by the knowledge of the names of birds, there is no doubt that the knowledge of their names immensely increases our pleasure in their songs.

It may be contended that we could acquire a great amount of this knowledge without ever going outside London. You need not go beyond Hampstead Heath to discover the cuckoo, the jay, the kingfisher, the redwing, the nuthatch, the carrion crow, the redpoll, and scores of other birds. You can find the spotted flycatcher and the lesser spotted woodpecker in Kew Gardens. At Richmond, herons and grebes and green woodpeckers are almost common. This is perfectly true, but it is also true that the townsman has so many distractions that he seldom spends the whole day lolling in the garden or wandering on heaths and in parks. He has so much to do that he can do nothing very much. I should feel restless after an hour or so in a deck-chair in a town garden. In the country, on the other hand, I am content to sit lazily in a garden, if not exactly from sunrise, at least from the time at which I rise myself, till sunset and after. This gives the birds a chance, as it were, of showing themselves. The impatient man will have left his hammock half-an-hour before the tree-creeper alights to make its mouse-like run up the wooden wall of the barn. He will be inside the house answering letters when the greater spotted woodpecker pays its rare and apprehensive visit to the stem of the apple tree. Happily married goldfinches will return to the accompaniment of a song as delightful as their colours to their nest in the pear-tree, while he is away babbling into the telephone. He will be out buying a magazine while the swallows are teaching their young, hesitant as bathers on a cold day taking their first plunge, to fly. It was as an inmate of the Old Prison that for the first time in my life I overcame this townsman's fatal restlessness and was content to sit and watch the day passing. I cannot overcome it in Hampstead. Even if I had no work to do, there would be something else to distract me. I sometimes wish I was back in the Old Prison.

Even work becomes pleasant in a garden. And by work, I do not mean selling things or buying things or scribbling on paper, but honest hard work, digging the soil. To have one's own spade in one's hands eating into one's own earth is an occupation for a king. It is wearisome—it is even humiliating for the beginner when he discovers that he has half-ruined the garden by digging up the subsoil and throwing it on the surface—but with what an ardour of hope the new, shining-edged spade is thrust into the ground! The crops are already half-grown in the imagination. For the first time in one's life, one appreciates the beauty of potatoes. There is not a vegetable so mean that the initiate gardener cannot become its enthusiastic partisan. The possessive instinct makes him look forward to the appearance of his own turnips and his own Brussels sprouts as if he were preparing for a banquet of the gods. There could be no greater proof of the appeal of gardening to the imagination than the fact that it has enabled men to look with a fatuous fondness on vegetable marrows. It must have been gardeners with their passion for huge achievements who first popularised that monstrous squelch of insipidity. They feel something akin to the boastful joy of parenthood as they watch the reptile fruit slowly assuming the dimensions of the Fat Boy of Peckham. I have known that unholy joy myself. I should know it again if I went back to the Old Prison House. For who even that loathes vegetable marrows could, if he had a garden, resist the temptation to grow vegetable marrows and see them day by day getting bigger and bigger?

It is true that my family maintained that I did none of the real work in the garden—that I merely walked about with gardening-books while the others were working and read passages out proving that whatever they had just done was wrong. I do not deny that I sought guidance from books and that, as a result of doing so, I was able to point out various errors into which the others fell in the positioning of pea-sticks, the thinning of carrots, and the pinching of broad beans. My activities, however, were physical as well as intellectual. It was not the others, but I, who planted the row of shallots, for instance, so near the lawn that, whenever the West wind blew, it sent a gentle odorous waft of onion lawnwards that made the place uninhabitable for anybody who disliked the smell of onions. The infructuous leek-bed, the rathe cos-lettuces that ran to seed—these, too, were evidences that I had not been a mere book-reading idler. When I look back on my life in the garden of the Old Prison House, indeed, I see myself as one of the world's workers sculptured by Rodin. That, perhaps, is why I think of the house with such reminiscent tenderness, almost forgiving the cook even her masterpiece of cruelty when she must have flung great handfuls of pepper into the otherwise tasteless soup.

Y. Y.

MOONSHINE

Professor Guthnich of the Observatory at Neubabelsberg near Berlin is certain that, "should some urgent necessity arise," we could "conquer the moon."

Good news, Professor! Yet why wait
Till dire events necessitate
This glorious aggression?
The world is full of folks for whom
By fate's unpalatable doom
Our ordered life provides no room
For healthy self-expression.

Bullies and egoists by scores,
Gunmen, dictators, cranks and bores,
And those who rattle sabres;
The people whom no jokes amuse,
And those who can't abide the Jews,
Or feel a mission to abuse
Or massacre their neighbours.

Gladly we'd see established soon
An Aryan State within the moon
In holy isolation;
And spheres of lunar influence claimed
By States whose battle-lust untamed
Still makes of robbery unashamed
The glory of a nation.

Think of the peace they'd leave behind!
Think too, how easy they may find
The conquest, on alighting:
If men are in the moon indeed
They yet may be a gentle breed
Too truly civilised to need
The art and craft of fighting.

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

"NAMING" THE AGGRESSOR

SIR,—The recent French Notes may be regarded as a tactful reminder that if the British Government wants any "disarmament" it must go to Canossa; in other words, return to the *terra firma* of Article 8 of the Covenant. "The enforcement by common action of international obligations" is a *sine qua non* condition of any surrender of national power. It is no use the British Government attempting to side-step the issue by offering a vague promise of action against a State rearming above the level fixed by a Disarmament Convention. For without France there can be no Convention.

Since "naming" the aggressor will be an essential part of any scheme for collective action within the meaning of the Covenant, I may perhaps be allowed to point out the fallacy in one of the arguments constantly heard in this country against "automatic" sanctions. In spite of our clear obligation under Article 10 "to respect and preserve as against external aggression the *territorial integrity* . . ." etc., it is frequently said that no definition based on the violation of some national frontier will ever be satisfactory. Under cover of a *political* refusal to give a guarantee of all the territorial provisions of the Peace Treaties, which is intelligible enough, the idea is sedulously spread that any definition of aggression is a lawyers' trap.

The ghost of "war-guilt" haunts all discussion on this question. Because the moral responsibility for the outbreak of war in 1914 cannot be fastened on any one State or group of States it is conveniently assumed that this will always be the case. Sir Austen Chamberlain's rhetoric about a definition of aggression being "a trap for the unwary and a signpost for the guilty" goes unchallenged. Yet experience of the cases of aggression dealt with by the League tells a very different story—it has not yet been seriously suggested, for instance, that China was the aggressor in September, 1931!

Indeed, the whole point is that under the conditions of public right contemplated in the Covenant, with guarantees of "security" (Article 10) *and* of peaceful change (Article 19), an act of aggression is quite simply *armed trespass*. And it is the *act* that matters. No question of motive, of intentions, need be considered. "Pooled security" means the employment of armaments by international authority as policing power; the policeman is not concerned with the history behind a brawl or a riot—that is for the magistrate.

Besides the orthodox League doctrine that regards Article 10 as the keystone of the whole structure, there is now the Politis formula, based on the Soviet Russian definition of aggression, which amounts to much the same thing. And, still more significant perhaps, President Roosevelt has frankly rallied to the plain meaning of Article 10, declaring *urbi et orbi* that "invasion of territory constitutes sufficient evidence of an act of aggression."

Granted that any explicit guarantee of collective security must be accompanied by an equally explicit reaffirmation of the principle of treaty revisability, is there any other reason than that of the ostrich for the British Government's refusal to honour their obligations under the Covenant? Against France's case we haven't a leg to stand on. W. HORSFALL CARTER

Savile Club.

INDIA

SIR,—Mr. Horace Alexander is so genuinely and zealously a friend of India that one is reluctant to express dissent from anything he feels compelled to say publicly on the subject that is known to be very close to his heart. But in the interests of common fairness one is bound to ask why, when he is prepared to offer a qualified tribute to Lord Sankey and Sir Samuel Hoare, he dismisses the efforts (tenaciously maintained in spite of considerable discouragement) of Sir Tej Sapru, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. N. M. Joshi, the late Rangaswami Iyenger and others, as being those of people who are "eager to keep on good terms with us?" It seems a little ungracious to suggest that those who have laboured over a number of years to bring about a settlement are time-servers, as against the school of thought that has preferred the spectacular futilities of civil disobedience to the dull grind of constitution-making.

It would obviously be out of place to discuss, within the scope of a short letter, the implications of the strange theory that everything would be well in India, "if only you people would deal with the one man who can deliver the goods." Mahatma-worship may appeal to the spiritually minded, but when transferred to the realm of politics it seems to bear a family resemblance to that "leadership principle" which has, in its Fascist and Nazi manifestations, filled true democrats with dismay. Is Young India, bitterly disillusioned and mistrustful to-day, as convinced of the efficacy of one-man rule under the Congress Dispensation as Mr. Alexander still seems to be? I doubt it.

Let us have a constituent assembly in India by all means, if there is any likelihood of achieving nation-wide agreement on an immediately realisable programme. Such a programme has already been put forward in the Memorandum of the British-Indian Delegates to the Joint Select Committee, published on November 16th, 1933, on the eve of their departure for India. To ignore it and the White Paper on which it is based would be an incredible act of folly, the results of which no thinking man ought to want to contemplate. PHILIP COX

41 Museum Street, W.C.1.

THE GERMAN BURNED BOOKS

SIR,—The letter in your issue of 14th inst. *re* the forthcoming opening of a "German Library of the Burned Books" in Paris suggested to me a reflection which cannot have been intended by its distinguished signatories. Have we not here an argument against the establishment of a World-State, or even a United Europe? The evils of nationalism are notorious, but is there not an important virtue which employs as its instrument man's inherent propensity diligently to cast out the mote from his neighbour's eye? Tyranny in Germany, by a sort of counter-irritant, provokes a display of liberalism in France; and doubtless if France were to ostracise the dominant American art, Berlin would not be slow to exhibit a "French Programme of the Banned Films." But whither would the persecuted flee from an all-embracing authority during those cyclical periods of oppression which would presumably visit humanity in the future as in the

present and past. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* Mr. Wells, of course, retorts: "There would be no persecuted in a supra-national State." I wonder!

RONALD F. ADGIE

6 Radlyn Court,
Park Avenue, Harrogate.

"MANAGING ON THE DOLE"

SIR,—I think your correspondent, Sir Henry S. Keith, is quite wrong in suggesting that a mother who maintains a husband and three children on the pittance of 29*s.* 3*d.* per week gives 6*s.* 3*d.* of that sum to the local rates. The rates are not levied, as your correspondent appears to assume, on the amount of the rent which includes rates. In the case in question the rateable value under the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, would apparently be £11 per annum, and assuming the rates are 12*s.* 6*d.* in the £ the amount paid would be 2*s.* 8*d.* per week and not 6*s.* 3*d.* per week. The case for the reform which your correspondent advocates is quite strong enough without exaggeration.

A. E. LAUDER

Palmers Green, N.13.

THE B.B.C. AND ITS CRITICS

SIR,—I have been waiting for some correspondence on the subject of your leading article on March 31st, but apart from "Highbrow," whose tastes lie in the direction of music and statistics, there has been an ominous silence. I say ominous because I feel that most of your readers have accepted your rather querulous comments with indifference, and really I think that you do yourself less than justice.

I had hoped that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION would forbear from the obvious criticisms which have been directed at the B.B.C. from so many quarters, not all disinterested by any means. I even expected some signs of appreciation of the fact that the B.B.C. must be equally unpopular with opposite extremes of political opinion and that the present management of the B.B.C. is at least trying to make it "the instrument, servant and instructor of an educated democracy." The practical difficulties of the role are, of course, enormous.

You complain that "the working classes, Labour, the view of the class-conscious proletariat—all these are entirely unrepresented in the B.B.C." and you may be right. I have no doubt, however, that the B.B.C. would be most grateful to you if you would provide it with a few members of the class-conscious proletariat who could speak to a subject with relevance and observance of the ordinary proposition. The supply is limited. The Ferrie case was surely sufficiently illuminating? I believe the so-called censorship to be non-existent except as applied to relevance and libel, and, to my knowledge, the B.B.C. makes serious efforts to procure the intelligent co-operation of the "class" to which you refer.

Rather diffidently I suggest that most critics of the B.B.C. rarely listen to its programmes. Frankly I consider that your article betrays an almost complete ignorance of the type of talks and plays, for example, which are broadcast. I agree with your general remarks about the English *petite bourgeoisie* and middle-class suburban Conservatives, but what are you going to do about it? I cannot speak for suburban London, but so far as the provinces are concerned a very obvious spread of liberal ideas and some approach to abstract conversation amongst these poor benighted can, in my opinion, be attributed to the influence of broadcasting.

I confess to a feeling of disappointment that you should allow a form of obvious intellectual snobbery to blind you to the practical aspects of the case.

H. B. DAKIN

5 Holly Bank,
Headingley, Leeds.

[This letter is referred to in Comments on an earlier page.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

PROGRESSIVE SCHOOLS

SIR,—Surely the significance of Mr. Tremlett's question is not how to punish the boy but how to prevent the crime. Surely it must not be regarded as an isolated incident, but as the outcome of a relationship.

Mr. Tremlett naturally refers to Gilbert, since he and many other old-fashioned schoolmasters are intent only on making the punishment fit the crime—not the motive, which is the important thing. "Ah," they say, "crime No. 1, caning!"—regardless of the boy, the master or the previous relationship.

But since Mr. Tremlett demands an answer, might I suggest that if the master were at all respected, public opinion among the other pupils would be a far more powerful and logical preventive?

The question of respect is, I think, a fundamental and a crucial one. At most public schools respect is assumed; in progressive schools it is earned. If the teacher deserves respect he or she gets it. Surely a great many schoolmasters don't deserve it.

Inequality is also assumed at public schools. Again, in progressive schools a relationship of mutual respect is earned. This, I think, is what Countess Russell implied and what Miss Isherwood meant, though she was hampered by the isolated incident.

Mr. Tremlett asks for a remedy. Public schools supply one—force. Progressive schools provide a remedy—persuasion—and a solution—a relationship of intrinsic, mutual respect which does not incite tea pouring. If the master can't command respect, then, if the school is one of perpetual tea pourers such as Mr. Tremlett envisages, the master must be condemned to having his neck thoroughly washed.

PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL BOY

SIR,—I wonder whether *anybody* "thinks that boys and masters should be on exactly the same terms as children are with each other." For obviously that is impossible. What is possible, and surely desirable, is that an adult in charge of children should give them a friendship which respects each child's individual personality without troubling about his (or her) dignity. My observation seems to tell me that such friendship draws the children together in friendship and respect to the adult and to one another. I should like to add that I think what matters in an adult's dealing with children is not so much what he does or says as how he feels.

ARTHUR ST. JOHN

Glenyards, Bonnybridge,
Stirlingshire.

CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY

SIR,—I suppose that every writer of a controversial article is flattered when a correspondent confesses that it has angered him. After reading Mr. Marshall's letter in your last issue I re-read my original article in the light of it. I could not find a word I would wish to change. Mr. Marshall seems to take it for granted that criminals and psychologists are two different species. I have known men and women who described themselves as psychologists, and about an equal number of men and women whom society has branded as criminals. So far as essentials are concerned I really could not tell t'other from which.

HARRY ROBERTS

Oakshott Hanger, Hawkley,
Liss, Hants.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

SIR,—In view of the very grave issues raised by the new Sedition Bill, my Council are calling a conference of societies likely to be affected by the provisions of this Bill if it becomes law.

This conference will be held at the Conway Hall on Friday, April 27th, at 8.15. Invitations are being sent out to progressive societies, but if, in the short time at our disposal, any society should be omitted by an oversight, I trust that they will immediately communicate with me.

RONALD KIDD,
Secretary

The Council for Civil Liberties,
Embankment Chambers,
43 Villiers Street, W.C.2.

NEWSPAPERS IN THE GENERAL STRIKE

SIR,—In his most interesting review of his eighteen years' editorship of the *New Statesman*, Mr. Clifford Sharp says that "in the first week of the General Strike of 1926 the *New Statesman* was certainly the only weekly and almost the only London newspaper of any description (except, I am told, the *Feathered World*) which contrived to carry on 'business as usual.'"

East Africa can certainly claim to be honourably bracketed with the *New Statesman* in that respect. In the first week of the Strike we produced a sixteen-page issue, as against twenty-four pages in the previous year, and in the second week of the Strike we again contrived to issue a sixteen-page number, publication of both being as prompt as in normal times. You are fully entitled to recall with gratification the professional scoop which the *New Statesman* achieved in extremely difficult circumstances, and we, too, are proud that we managed to serve our subscribers and advertisers as usual.

F. S. JOELSON,
Editor, *East Africa*

91 Great Titchfield Street, W.1.

Miscellany

THE LAUGHING WOMAN

An interesting story on the stage brings out more vividly than a dull one can the difference between the art of the Playwright and of the Novelist. If the story unrolled before our eyes is dull—well, we miss so much that we cannot attend to that difference. But if in spite of the characters being interesting and the situations convincing we still are aware of missing *something*, then that is likely to be something peculiar to Drama.

Watching *The Laughing Woman* at the New Theatre was like re-reading at a happy moment of hallucination pages from Mr. Ede's *Savage Messiah*, the book in which he made excitingly intelligible the queer story of the sculptor, Henri Gaudier, and of his sister, as he called her, Sophie Brzeska: his genius, her strangeness; their indissoluble relation; their selflessness and their mutual exactingness; their rages and their childlike joys; the gloom of their poverty and the brightness of their fierce integrity. I have no idea what in the theatre my impressions would have been had I never read that book—it had made too lasting an impression, and perhaps memories from it supplied sometimes what was not upon the stage. I can only say that my companion, who had not read it, nor heard of Gaudier-Brzeska, found the stage version of those characters convincing and the situations interesting. He enjoyed it all as an unusual and vivid "study in the artistic temperament." There before his eyes were a man and woman who put Art above all other ends, who were united not by the tie of temperament (in many respects they were contrasts), not by sex, not even by their loneliness, though that had helped to bring them together, but through adoring in each other the passion they respected in themselves, a passion which made them stand back to back against a world that either trades in what they worship or only pretends an interest in it. In the woman, however, there was a conflict, a conflict between the maternal and the artistic instinct; in the man there was no conflict. He had only to keep himself a sharp bright instrument; she had to choose between living herself or "through him" for Art. Doubting herself, she made the choice Milton would have approved; confident of himself, he had only to live resolutely every hour of the day in the highest state of free tension possible—without thought, without calculation, without fear. Loyalty to his instinctive reactions makes the artist in the play behave exactly as Gaudier-Brzeska behaved in life on a crucial occasion. Although René Latour had shirked military service in peace time as the most senseless, infamous interference with everything that matters, when the war comes he goes to fight in France—and is shot. And she? Afterwards? She sits stupefied every day in the London Art Gallery where his bust of her as "The Laughing Lady" has found at last its proper place, a quiet shabby dotard.

It is a good story, and thanks to the acting of Mr. Stephen Haggard as René Latour and of Miss Veronica Turleigh as Ingrid Rydman it makes its impression. His performance is good; hers remarkable. She has to depict conflicts of emotion, and she conveys them with a quiet subtlety—never overstrained—which *is* fine acting. I have not seen so thoroughly *understood* an interpretation by an actress, unknown to wider fame, since I watched Miss Beatrix Lehman as Emily Brontë in *Wild Decembers*. The play naturally gives to Miss Veronica Turleigh greater opportunities than to Mr. Stephen Haggard. He must be all-of-a-piece, ever the same; impulsive, swift whether in tenderness or harshness, he exhibits continually the behaviour of one who, through some queer self-discipline, has attained the state which M. Gide, who loves a little flutter in mystic shares, has blessed as that of *l'action gratuite*. In Latour there is nothing to explain; he is himself. He instantly obeys the prod of instinct. He does not require to think. He cannot think, only perceive. When he reads in the paper that war has broken out, he instantly feels he must go. He calls for a bit of brown paper and wraps up his shoes, a shirt, and a few tools. He cannot explain why; he has never attended to his motives—knowing only one, his art—or to probabilities. He merely remarks that he is not an internationalist (though by the by he has abused France heartily several times). She knows that decision is inevitable, and he is sorry, very, very sorry for her, and goes.

Thus the part of René Latour only demands of the actor impetuosity, vehemence, freedom of gesture. These Mr. Haggard supplies—and a sympathetic, carefree, haggard appearance. René has merely an oblivious contempt for all standards but those of the artist; Ingrid, on the contrary, fears the world as an enemy which can crush. Hasn't she to fend from day to day for them both? This attitude Miss Veronica Turleigh brought out admirably in the scene of the dinner-party to which a patron has asked them both. She senses the mocking lack of sympathy surrounding them and the impertinent curiosity about their relations; and the first glass of wine, flying from an empty stomach to her head, loosens her tongue. The nervous resentment gathering into black anger in Miss Turleigh's face while she parried fiercely what was intended to *pass* as good-natured chaff was a fine piece of acting; so too was her expression of intense foreboding in the first scene when at last she consents to throw in her lot with Latour. He needs her, loves her, but he is not merely selfish in overpersuading her. It is simply incomprehensible to him that an artist, and she is one, could in any circumstances be distracted from his aim. What she fears is all nonsense. But the woman in her tells her that if she once allows personal relationships to enter her life her peace, and with it her power to concentrate on her work, will be destroyed. Gaily, delightedly, he overrides her forebodings. One thing she insists upon: there shall be no physical intimacy between them. Through that proviso, to which he easily assents, she vainly hopes to keep just enough independence to continue her work. But, alas, she loves him, longs to protect him; the *spiritual* intimacy between them is too deep; henceforth she must live "through him." She is swallowed.

This is the first scene of the first act. Here Miss Turleigh's level, clear, aloof voice (she manages the foreign accent perfectly), her air of being swept to a doom which is sweet to her, her distressed yet placid gestures, her natural yet exotic grace (she has the poses and the odd, grave pheasant-like look of early John women) are exactly right. Surely there is enough significance here for a first-rate play? Yes, and yet I missed something.

Though *The Laughing Woman* is significant fiction and founded upon truth, it is not, as a whole, dramatic. It has dramatic moments, but it lacks movement, development. Between a short prologue and a short epilogue, both tableaux, there are seven scenes, divided into three acts. They also are really tableaux, scenes from a novel about an artist's life. After the first scene, which starts the story, thirty might have followed—or three. The result would have been only the difference between a long novel and a short one.

When we are reading a novel we are content to live in the author's characters, to observe them and feel what they are feeling. In the theatre we want something more. We want suspense and a gathering accumulation of interest. Exposition of character, however subtle and true, is not the end of drama. It is a precious by-product of the best drama, but situation and crescendo are of prior importance. The dramatist's theme (Gordon Daviot) is here the relation of two artists, one a man the other a woman, to each other, and their common relation to the philistine world. She has shown both, like a good novelist; in the prologue and epilogue the indifference of the public to work which to the makers of it was the crown of the lives; in subsequent scenes both aspects of her theme together—the quarrels, poverty, intimacy, loyalty of the pair and their attitude towards the humbug and commercialism of prowling patrons, snob-critics and dealers. It is much to have done, but not enough. But surely you will say, was not the last scene in which René suddenly went off to the war a climax? No: it was just an event, illustrating his nature;

a spontaneous reaction on his part of no more significance than his gift to a rich young model of one of his little masterpieces, or his indifference to a dealer pocketing, for two shillings a-piece, good drawings which he had used. It was not led up to; it happened. The play was a story which stopped, but one worth following with our eyes and our ears.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

FROM HOME TO ROME

Riptide *: Empire.*
Crainquebille *: Film Society.*
Roman Scandals *: Leicester Square.*

Norma Shearer, Queen of the Screen, returns after a long holiday and in a strange picture. Strange because it opens as sophisticatedly and successfully as anyone could desire, and then, after a third of its length, to the consternation and silence of the audience, falls right away to pieces. An ingenious beginning introduces the two principals, Marshall and Shearer, in such guise that they can be recognised only by their voices. The second movement shows Montgomery, with first-rate dialogue, endeavouring to seduce the lady from allegiance to her husband. But from that moment on all the characters and motives suddenly become incredible. And if we did believe them we wouldn't like them. Herbert Marshall turns into just that sort of odious, sanctimonious prig of a husband who is too self-righteous either to credit his wife's innocence or treat her as if she were guilty. Not even making him an English lord can make him seem anything but an insufferable stodge or give him an atom of sympathy in comparison with Robert Montgomery as the drunken wastrel, sodden yet faithful forever. A sound criticism is that of one grandmother in the audience who was heard to murmur: "If you'd told me Bob Montgomery didn't get the girl, I wouldn't have come." Miss Shearer's final choice seems just stubborn. I cannot help feeling that a stronger conflict would have been the plot vice versa, a contest between Montgomery as husband—even his charm might pall as *constant* bottle companion—and Marshall as a solid, rock-like steady lover. Shearer's acting is always able, but her gaiety on the loose would dilute the cocktails at any party. The triumph is Mrs. Patrick Campbell's, for, with an insignificant part and obvious relative inexperience in screen-acting she yet so perfectly delivers her not very well-written lines that the audience swallows each one whole with a gusto they usually reserve only for the dishes of those old war-horses Dressler and Skipworth,

Everybody knows *Crainquebille*, the Anatole France story of the good and simple vegetable-monger whose misfortune it is to suffer ruin through encounter with the police which made, in the hands of Feyder, one of the most distinguished of French silent films. The talkie is not moving in quite the same degree. It suffers from indefiniteness of purpose. The conflict with the police should be a dramatic turning-point, but in this version the general malice of his neighbours and Crainquebille's own patient indignation about life are just as marked before his arrest as after. Thus his downfall is reduced to the dimension of a mere incident, a newspaper paragraph. But not even this objectivity is consistent; in making the children at once Crainquebille's most determined tormentors and his sole remaining friends, the director seems to be reaching after some obscure symbolism. None the less, as a series of undynamic thumb-nail portraits of types fitted into a background of perfectly rendered Parisian atmosphere, this little picture is no less than brilliant. A "short" in the same programme, a more than documentary on the illegal fisheries of the Rhône, is so intelligent both in visual treatment and in commentary that no one should miss it should it reach the specialist halls.

Roman Scandals places on exhibition a collection of mammary glands so rich and varied that it must be of considerable value in the anthropological study of the American peoples. None appeared to me especially remarkable, but then, in such a matter, I am only an amateur—other aspects engross my attention. I had time, however, to make one discovery, that vaccination seemingly was known in ancient Rome. This exhibition, and repeated jokes about the cold-inducing qualities of the pantless character of the Roman style of dressing, appear to afford the reason for the selection of the locale, chronological and geographical, of Eddie Cantor's latest jaunt with the Goldwyn girls. Not even the united efforts of the expert authors of *Once in a Lifetime* and *The Road to Rome* provide a plot that holds the attention, and the songs are bad enough quite positively to lull it. None the less, even desultory slapstick is an oasis in these days when the cinema has grown so self-conscious, and the climax is a chariot-race so gorgeous that it reminds us of all we have lost through talking pictures. If only some great vested interest like Western or General Electric would patent some sort of Silence Machine, the public might be given a chance to enjoy pictures again. The same programme includes the worst Silly Symphony and the best Mickey for years.

IVOR MONTAGU

WHAT IS AN ARTIST?

THE simplest and least vulnerable definition of an artist is a man whose main occupation is producing or reproducing art. To define art is more difficult and I shall not attempt it, believing as I do that no reality is to be put into an intellectual definition and that art is as much of a reality as a primrose or a plane tree, differing, like them, from all intellectual constructions.

But I would like to use the word artist in a narrower sense than the one I have defined. It is quite clear, is it not, that every musician is not an artist? Musicians are less rare than artists, even extremely gifted musicians; to me the distinction is so clear that I am prepared to put my hand on my heart and swear "This is an artist" when I meet one, using the word in my very narrow sense.

It is not often that this happens but it happened this week. We have heard during the past year in London a good deal of chamber music. Much of it has been highly praised in various quarters. Dame Ethel Smyth rhapsodised in *Time and Tide* over the Kutcher Quartet which played at the last of the Courtauld-Sargent concerts. I like the Kutcher Quartet, which has undeniable merits, but it does not send me into Smythian ecstasies. Then there is the Busch Quartet which, at last, is having a well-deserved success, some of its Beethoven performances at the Wigmore Hall during the past season being of exceptional quality. Then there was Schnabel and the Pro Arte Quartet, but in spite of the unique genius of Schnabel (or, perhaps, because of it) I did not find this combination a complete success. Nor, on the one occasion I have heard Schnabel and Huberman in a sonata recital (they are giving another at the Queen's Hall next Saturday which may give me a different impression) did I think it an ideal combination.

On a much smaller scale the combination of Adolf Busch and Rudolf Serkin equally lacks the quality I seek. Busch is a fine musician and Serkin is a fine pianist, but I would not apply my word "artist" in my exclusive sense to either of these admirable talents. On the other hand, I heard for the first time a sonata recital this week at the Wigmore Hall by Alma Moodie (violinist) and Eduard Erdmann (pianist), and I consider this the best violin and pianoforte combination I have ever heard. Alma Moodie, who played the Busoni Violin Concerto at the Royal Philharmonic Society's concert under Beecham last week, is a remarkable violinist with the pure classic style of Flesch, a beautiful tone, a robustness very unusual in a woman, and a quite exceptional rhythmic vitality. But I am prejudiced against women to the point of almost denying categorically the possibility of a woman being, in my sense of the word, an artist. Therefore I can only say of Alma Moodie that I consider her a better violinist than Busch and a worthy colleague of Erdmann, with whom she accords

to a degree approaching perfection. As for Eduard Erdmann, whom I had never heard before, he had not been at the pianoforte for five minutes before I exclaimed to myself, "This is an artist." Yes, Erdmann, like Schnabel (to whom I am not comparing him, as for one thing I don't yet know to what heights Erdmann can reach), is an artist, and this quality distinguishes, him to my mind, for ever from such a fine pianist for example, as Horowitz, who in my meaning of the word is not an artist but only a virtuoso.

I cannot understand the degree of rapture to which Horowitz has incited some of my colleagues. To me Horowitz seems to have everything but the essential quality which makes a man an artist, whereas Erdmann is just overflowing with this rarest of virtues. I wonder how many years it will take Erdmann to win the public he deserves in England. I understand his reputation is high in Germany, but so is that of Wilhelm Backhaus who, in my opinion, is a good pianist but no artist at all, and I would not cross the street any more to hear Backhaus play. I have heard this sort of playing often enough and have done with it once for all; it is not playing for me. But now, wherever I see Erdmann's name I shall go and I shall listen even to Bach played by him with a passionate rapture such as his playing of the "Goldberg" Variations gave me last Tuesday night. Here is the real thing unadulterated and unspoiled.

But I fear that the musical public of London that is capable of appreciating Erdmann will have, under present conditions, little chance of doing so. He is not yet a famous name here; there are, as far as I know, no gramophone records of his playing; or if there are, they are given no publicity. Now it seems to me that we have no hope of hearing new talent here unless it is through the agency of the B.B.C. But I fear that even the B.B.C. is handicapped by the universal lack of judgment and confidence in their judgment which most people to-day feel. I was once told that even the B.B.C. want "names" for their symphony concerts. But how are the new men of talent to get their names if the B.B.C. will not engage young men of genius like Erdmann on the strength of their own judgment without a "name." One reason may be their fear of hostile criticism from that section of English musicians which will grudgingly tolerate (because it cannot help it!) the engagement of world-famous artists by the B.B.C., but expects the places for newcomers who as yet have no "names" to be reserved for English musicians.

But I suspect there is another reason, namely, the incapacity of anyone at the B.B.C. to stake his life on his judgment. This is the universal weakness of this age. Nobody knows and therefore nobody dares to declare himself, but all seek refuge in hiding anonymously in a group. To sense what can be made a fashion, what is in vogue, and to praise whatever and whosoever affiliates himself with the group in vogue, is the utmost any critic either of music or painting or poetry dares to do.

Well, I do not know whether Erdmann has a vogue in Germany or not; I do not know whether he will ever be a great success in England or not, but I do know that wherever Erdmann plays in London I shall be there and that wherever Alma Moodie and Erdmann give a sonata recital together I shall be there, and I shall know that my enjoyment will be as great as it is rare.

W. J. TURNER

ABSOLUTISM AND UNIT ONE

MR. CONSTANT LAMBERT, writing, in *Music Ho!* (Faber 10*s.* 6*d.*) of the folk-song, says ". . . once you have played it through there is nothing much you can do except play it over again, and play it rather louder." It is partly because Ennui Itself peeps between the words of this extremely amusing remark that I thought how well it is beginning to apply to so much modern painting, and decoration. I do not, for a moment, mean to imply that Unit One, with its first exhibition, has already reached a point at which all it can do is "to play it rather louder." But I will try to put forward some reasons why I think that this sad fate may lie in store for several of the members.

Mr. Paul Nash, in his letter to the *Times* of last June, announcing the formation of the group, wrote as follows:

> It cannot be said that all these artists practise "abstract" art, or that they are all interested in an architectonic quality principally, although this, perhaps, is a common pursuit with the majority. More exactly, Unit One may be said to stand for the expression of a truly contemporary spirit, for that thing which is recognised as peculiarly *of to-day* in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

This quotation would seem enough to show that the object of Unit One is rather to share a gallery than an aesthetic creed. Yet Mr. Nash seems to be hinting at one, and, later in his letter, we find:

> The fact that some of them have come through many phases and arrived at a so-called abstract expression is not important; they have come through and wish to go on. This tends to isolate them from the majority of their contemporaries. They discover that what they stand for is decidedly at variance with the Great Unconscious School of Painting, also they seem to be lacking in reverence for Nature as such. These facts are frequently pointed out to them. Their answer is that they are interested in other matters. . . . Design, for instance—considered as a structural pursuit; imagination, explored apart from literature or metaphysics.

A doubt may well begin to enter one's mind, at this point, as to whether there is not, after all, a creed lurking about somewhere or other. I myself believe there is. Mr. Read helps us to find it when, on the final page of his introduction, *Unit One* edited by Herbert Read (Cassell 10*s.* 6*d.*) he says:

> . . . Mr. Nicholson's paintings and constructions are the purest form of abstract art. In them the plastic arts do really attain to the condition of music. Mr. Wadsworth is perhaps equally abstract, but his faith is not so transcendental—it is, in fact, materialistic, and he does not need to say more than that a picture is "a statement of plastic facts in space." His sense of purity is not one of spiritual essence, but of economical expression—a pure logic rather than a pure vision.

"Purest," "Purity," "Pure"—they have a familiar, a faintly folk-song ring. Those who read Mr. Read's last work, *Art Now*, may recall the following passage:

> But the cubist, taking the object as a point of departure, abstracts from it, to revert to the words of Plato, by means of lathes, rulers, and squares, the inherent straight lines and curves, surfaces and solid forms. The result is a work giving true pleasure, in no way depending on the representation of the object, not relative to its use or associations, but always and naturally and absolutely beautiful.

Now, in spite of the fact that Mr. Read claims to have "no status within the group," and that both he and Mr. Nash reiterate the mutual aesthetic independence of its members, I cannot help feeling that Mr. Read is something more than merely an impresario, and that the weight of his influence is, not wholly consciously, on the side of one particular aesthetic theory. This theory is adumbrated in his words on Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Wadsworth, and it centres, I fear, upon a belief in the possibility of Absolute Beauty in the Platonic sense. One might presume that Mr. Read considers it to have been achieved already, here and there, in Unit One. While I am second to none in my admiration for much that Mr. Read has written, and find myself in complete accord with his desire to make the criticism of art something deeper than "a seismographic record of personal thrills and tremors," I am sure that there is nothing more dooming in the world than a partiality for Absolutes.

It seems to me the final, wildest, and most insidious ruse of a thwarted Romanticism. Several of the members of Unit One look very much as if they were in pursuit of absolute values, and, if they are, they will only be able to repeat what they have already done, and repeat it rather louder. Because not only does the seeker after absolute values, in Art as in everything else, always fail to find them, but he loses the power of achieving those values which can exist for a dream of those which cannot.

Let us compare, for instance, Mr. Nash's presumably "impure" *Formal Dream*, No. 23, with "pure logic"; Mr. Wadsworth's *Dux and Comes: Exhalation*, No. 27. Both of these works are now on view at the Mayor Gallery.

Mr. Nash's picture is an abstract, designed in verticals (it might be described as resembling the wooden underpinning of a building, in recession), and painted in oils, with blues, whites and warm browns. Mr. Wadsworth's abstract is in Tempera. On the left side of the picture there is a dark jigsaw-puzzle shape imposed on a light jigsaw-puzzle shape, and on the right is a smaller version of practically the same design. These two masses are isolated upon a neutral background. Now, whatever differences in intention and theory that these two artists may have had, they were at one, at least, in their desire to make a work of art. Mr. Nash, however, used oils, and his intuition: Mr. Wadsworth used tempera, and his brain. Though the latter was, of course, at perfect liberty to use what medium he wished, his choice is most significant. It is the choice of an Absolutist. The successful manipulation of oils demands a constant preoccupation with, and intuitive grasp of, the action of light on surfaces. It is a fluent, all-embracing medium, not an exclusive, cerebral one. He who rejects the world of visual appearance, who wishes to make a "pure" design out of his head; map it out, and colour it in—why should such a man use oils? But he who accepts the world, who gives back, through the vehicle of his imagination, what the eye has received—it is not surprising if he should choose oils.

In *Art Now*," Mr. Read, immediately after a passage on Picasso, has said: "We have to realise that we are now concerned, not with a logical development of the art of painting in Europe, not even with a development for which there is any historic parallel, but with an abrupt break with all tradition, with all preconceptions of what the art of painting should be. It would be much better if we could altogether abandon the word 'painting' for such an activity, but so long as it is an affair of canvas and paint, I am afraid that is too much to expect." It is Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Bigge and, if one takes as representative his present work at the Mayor Gallery, Mr. Nicholson, that constitute this abrupt break, not Picasso. Mr. Read seems puzzled by the obstinate refusal on the part of Picasso, and other artists, to give up materials which the experience of centuries has perfected for their purpose. I suggest to him that this is because no abrupt break with tradition has been made by these artists. The tradition is really quite safe, with Picasso, Ronault, Klee, Chagall, Braque and Matisse. With Mr. Nash, too.

But where it is not so safe is with some of his fellow-contributors at the Mayor Gallery. BRIAN HOWARD

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Three Sisters"

Lavish musical shows are bound to be inane. At their best they make a virtue of this necessity and by refusing to commit themselves to a particular line allow room for any individual inanity that may turn up. A Frith-scene of Derby Day may form a very proper background for a hot-jazz number, and a Tyneside comedian may interrupt a serious love scene with charming results. But Drury Lane puts its foot down. The Romance must have a capital R and the comedians must be kept in the proper place: anyone who cracks a joke must seem a little vulgar. The Derby scenes must outdo Frith in detail, and the war-time scenes must outdo *Cavalcade* in their production of bellicose emotions. In this new musical show there is plenty of talent, but it all suffers from the general oppressiveness. If one has seen Charlotte Greenwood at her most ebullient in an Eddie Cantor film one is bound to be disappointed with her here. If one saw Albert Burdon last year rollicking through his super end-of-the-pier entertainment at the Lyceum one can only deplore his propensity for getting miscast (for it happened before, in *Evergreen*). Stanley Holloway comes off best because his aloof, deprecating air seems to have a personal application. The lavishness and punctilious detail of *Three Sisters* will no doubt draw the crowds for months. The capacities of the revolving stage surprise pleasantly until they produce a surfeit. The oleaginous music is comforting until it causes queasiness. There are some excellent comedy scenes if only one had time to forget and forgive the surroundings. But those who would see their favourite comedians and idols of romance in the right atmosphere should stop away, for here the former are damped, and the latter provokingly enshrined.

"Counsellor-at-Law"

It is depressing to have to record a further encroachment of the Hollywood mentality on the theatre's preserves, sponsored by so competent a technician as Elmer Rice, whose job surely lies elsewhere. *Counsellor-at-Law* is typical in its sentimental amorality of the hopes, fears and ideals of the tedious vulgarians who provide so many of the world's heart-throbs these days: and despite a very courageous and competent tackling by the Birmingham Repertory Company at the Piccadilly Theatre, the impression that the piece is really nothing more than hack-cinema remains. George Simon, eminent New York lawyer, is proud of his humble origin but prouder still of his patrician wife. He is in danger of ruin owing to the discovery by a rival lawyer of an early indiscretion in the matter of a faked alibi. But at the darkest hour his ex-jailbird henchman discovers something in the rival lawyer's present which more than balances the peccadillo in George's past and everything is saved except George's illusion concerning his wife, who has bolted to Europe with a friend.

Mr. Rice's individuality emerges only in his panoramic display of a busy lawyer's office and in an inconclusive debate between his go-getter hero and a fierce young Communist whom he tries to help for old time's sake. Otherwise Mr. Hugh Miller's valiant portrayal of the lawyer is of little avail. The joy of the evening is provided by Mr. Charles Victor, whose prolix humility as the henchman is as funny as was his immortal film magnate in *Once in a Lifetime*.

"Morgenrot"

This film, which is appearing at the Curzon Cinema, is one in which the vicissitudes of submarine warfare are exploited with maximum success. That part of it which deals with female anxieties at home is not so good: it would have needed genius to keep the level up there. But the scenes in the submarine itself —when Herr Rudolf Forster is not being too noble—are magnificent: the torpedoing and periscoping are done to perfection. There have been several American films on the same subject, but none of them can be mentioned in the same breath.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, April 20th—
- "Children Throughout the Ages" Exhibition, Chesterfield House, Mayfair.
- Public Debate on Birth Control between Dr. Norman Haire and Mr. Anthony Ludovici, Friends House, Euston Road, 8.
- "Dark Horizon," Daly's Theatre.
- B.B.C. Chamber Music Concert, Broadcasting House, 8.30.

SATURDAY, April 21st.—
- Schnabel and Huberman, Queen's Hall, 3.
- Concert of Works by Arnold Bax, H. V. Jervis-Read and Others, Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.
- Sir Richard Rees on "Communism and Art," International Centre, Oaklands, Hildenborough, Kent, 7.

SUNDAY, April 22nd—
- Sir Norman Angell on "Social Ethics and Popular Education," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, April 23rd—
- Shakespeare's Birthday Celebrations, Stratford-upon-Avon.
- Miss Ruth Draper, Haymarket Theatre.

TUESDAY, April 24th—
- Reginald E. Roper on "School Punishments and War," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence on "My Recent Visit to Egypt," Minerva Club, 28A Brunswick Square, 8.15.
- "The Geisha," Garrick Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, April 25th—
- Arthur Greenwood, M.P., at the National Labour Club Public Luncheon, Northumberland Rooms, 1.
- Professor J. E. Neale on "Queen Elizabeth," Bumpus' Court House, Oxford Street, 5.30.
- Professor H. Levy on "Science in an Irrational Society," Conway Hall, 7.
- Professor H. S. Jevons on "The Economic Development of India Compared with that of the U.S.S.R.," The Frank Wise Room, 21 Bloomsbury Square, 8.15.

THURSDAY, April 26th—
- Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

LOOKING at the photograph on the cover of E. M. Forster's biography of *Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson* (Arnold, 10*s.* 6*d.*), which shows him in his seventieth year wearing the Chinese Mandarin's cap which he used to put on at dinner, I asked myself of whom, besides its subject, it reminded me. In someone else I had met, not those features, but exactly that expression. Then I remembered: it was an old Nanny. Half-crippled by rheumatism and age, stoical, unselfish and uncomplaining, she watched the babies play and quarrel without illusions, without sentimentality and without austerity. The resemblance was far more than the expression of old age (Dickinson looked older than his years), it was due to things which he and Nanny shared in common: a complete lack of fuss, a personal reserve which seemed to have a faint flavour of ironing day and soap and water. But, above all, an indulgent humanity: Dickinson I saw, brought to the whole of mankind the love and understanding which the old nurse felt for children between certain ages belonging to one particular family. And perhaps it was that which called out in almost everyone who knew him that deep devotion which is felt for the rare people whose faintly astringent love can be permanently relied on.

* * *

Dickinson left a mass of autobiographical material to be published at the discretion of his literary executor and from this Mr. Forster has constructed a book which is absolutely delightful yet which leaves out too much; it might well have been longer and have contained more records of his friendships and of his talk. I have hardly ever enjoyed listening to two peoples' conversation more than to that of Dickinson and C. P. Sanger. No intelligence was so lightning quick as Sanger's and his wit and scepticism stirred Dickinson to humorous and uneasy profundity. The life of a man whom one has known oneself has a personal interest which makes it impossible to judge quite objectively, but I shall be astonished if those who did not know Dickinson do not read it with almost the same interest as his friends. For Mr. Forster while patching together a mosaic of the Recollections has, by adding to it, created a living portrait. It is not a question of style or literary skill, that we may take for granted, the unique merit of this book depends on what there was in common between subject and biographer, particularly on their sense of humour.

* * *

There is one aspect of Dickinson's life which was a surprise to me and it is hard to say whether very young men or their parents ought to find it more consoling, that is the number of false starts in life into which he was led by his idealism. He was very innocent and grew up slowly. Thus as an undergraduate he joined the volunteers and occupied himself in trying to reform his companions, on one occasion inviting an atheist who had been drunk to join the Church of England Temperance Society.

> the atheist was headachy and polite, 'but he declined the siren's voice.'

The discovery of Shelley's poetry helped to free him and turned him from crude missionary work to an interest in politics, but

> If Shelley rose like the morning star, Plato was heralded by the dubious light of Esoteric Buddhism . . . he approached Plato not as a writer of dialogues, or as a depictor of Athenian society, or a logician, or politician or a publicist, but as an adept who was in possession of absolute truth, which he had concealed in his writings, probably in his myths.

The result was that his first work of learning was a dissertation in which the doctrines of Plato and Plotinus are compared and harmonised. He then joined a Socialist experiment on the land which had been started by Mr. Harold Cox, then a Socialist, on a piece of barren heath in Surrey. He learned to plough, but found milking a cow was beyond him. The experiment collapsed, Harold Cox went to teach mathematics in India and Dickinson records:

> I have met him since and he still retains the personal charm he always had. But over the farm experiment a great ox sat upon our tongues.

This experience was followed by the delivery of a course of lectures on Carlyle, Emerson, Browning and Tennyson in provincial centres which seems to have been almost as ill-fated as Coleridge's. Dickinson explains his failure:

> 'I had no notion how to get into touch with ordinary people and no desire to do so, for I thought I was the bearer of a message which transcended all actual life.'
>
> 'The message was sometimes inaudible,' adds Forster. 'And according to one of his friends he would turn his back on his audience when he became interested and toddle away over the platform on his heels, patting himself meanwhile with both his hands behind.

Failure as a lecturer led to a startling reaction: he decided to become a doctor, a most fortunate decision, for though his career as a medical student lasted only a year, it led to his forming a friendship which endured until his death since:

> Roger Fry was also doing medicine though with neater fingers and would sometimes extricate him from the frog or worm with which he was involved.

Then luckily, his dissertation on Plotinus won him a fellowship, after which he made no more false starts.

* * *

Though Dickinson and Forster had many qualities in common, it was not so with their tastes:

> Shelley's influence . . . dominated Dickinson to the day of his death . . . and the same applies to two other arrivals from the world of books, Plato and Goethe.

And his biographer confesses that one of his limitations in discussing Dickinson is that these three writers have little appeal for him. When they travelled together to the Orient with R. C. Trevelyan, Forster stayed in India, which inspired in him a sympathy of which we know the fruits, while Dickinson's comment was:

> And *why* can't the races meet? Simply because the Indians *bore* the English. *That* is the simple adamantine fact.

"I disagree. . . . Perhaps he was overtired," says Forster, refusing to admit the adamantine fact which is so painfully true to many of us. In China he found his land of heart's desire. Trevelyan left him in Canton and hurried back to take part in the Lake Hunt and while he was racing up the Fell side, Dickinson was presenting a copy of *The Letters of John Chinaman* to the 76th Duke descended from Confucius. He was beloved by the Chinese but the country in which he was most appreciated was America and since he might have had an enormous influence it is a pity he could not have lived there more. My own first memory of Dickinson is linked with that of a strange American whom he was to have brought to the Old Vicarage, Grantchester, but who arrived alone. After waiting over an hour we sat down to lunch in the garden and the American remarked in a voice as desiccated as a beetle's:

> I see, Mr. Brooke, that you do not utilise the formality of spoken Grace. No words seem sufficiently informal yet some expression of worship is necessary. The beautiful solution we use in my home is to take hold of each other's hands beneath the table. Shall we do so now?

It was a stretch for me to reach Rupert's hand and when I found it we exchanged vicious pinches with decorum. After the meal was over, Dickinson appeared streaked with black mud and shivering. He had been tempted to bathe, had plunged naked into the river, but the sound of feminine voices had induced him to take shelter in a reed bed where he sank up to his waist in mud while a boatload of townspeople had picnicked on the opposite bank. His teeth chattered as he described his adventure, which appealed strongly to his sense of the ridiculous, yet at the same time he was anxious lest his American, to whom he was mysteriouly attached, had been having an awkward lunch. It was then I saw his charm:

> Charm in most men and women is a decoration. It genuinely belongs to them as a good complexion may but it lies on the surface and can vanish. Charm in Dickinson was structural.

DAVID GARNETT

MR. HUXLEY AS A TRAVELLER

Beyond the Mexique Bay. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. *Chatto and Windus.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

What a pity, one has sometimes felt, that Mr. Aldous Huxley is not a slightly less intelligent man; or that, being so intelligent, blessed with an easy lucid style, a knack of absorbing information and an almost unexampled faculty of spinning out that information into decorative and digressive tropes and figures, he should not have imposed upon his intelligence some kind of artificial restraint. For, really, the luxuriance of his mind is a trifle alarming! There are stretches in Mr. Huxley's work where every chance observation is like a grain of mango seed which has no sooner been dropped than it takes root and flourishes exceedingly, ramifying through paragraph after paragraph, obscuring the main issue and yet serving no apparent purpose save that of illustrating the extreme, almost tropical, fertility of the intellectual soil from which it springs. Such a criticism is strengthened by his new travel-book. Mr. Huxley makes little attempt to provide a continuous record of his adventures among the Central-American republics *Beyond the Mexique Bay;* and of the numerous subsections into which he finds it more convenient to chop up his narrative at least half have only the flimsiest and most accidental reference to Central America, since they might just as well have been provoked by a visit to Wigan, Heligoland, or the Bible Belt.

Mr. Huxley digresses with enormous gusto. Many of his digressions are pointed and eloquent; but he would appear to have lost sight of the simple fact that the chief object of a travel-book is to describe travel and to convey the charm of remote or comparatively inaccessible countries. Take the pages devoted to Guatemala. . . . Five times does Mr. Huxley head a subsection with the optimistic words: *Guatemala City*, covering some fifty-two pages in all; and yet the amount of information he manages to give us about "this pleasant, if rather ugly, town" might have been compressed into some seventy or eighty lines. Instead, we get his views on a variety of subjects—particularly on nationalism as a current political vice; an essay of ten thousand words or more—winding up with a brief but telling assault on the latest edition of the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*.

A similar method persists throughout the book. Trinidad leads him to bananas, and bananas to the discovery that "men do not live by bread or bananas alone: they also live by the passions"—an observation which, in its turn, prompts the remark that "at present enlightened self-interest is not acceptable to the great majority of civilised men and women." Jamaica is dismissed in a couple of paragraphs. "Jamaica," begins the second, "is the Pearl of the Caribbean—or is it the Clapham Junction of the West? I can never remember. . . ." So much for the delights of the West Indies. The next stop is at British Honduras, and, since Honduras produces—or used to produce—mahogany, it is inevitable that Mr. Huxley should discourse on Victorian armchairs, dinner-tables and sideboards, and of the revolution in domestic manners implied by the change from solid mahogany furnishings to leather, polished metal and plate glass. After a while, the reader becomes cautious. Knowing that Guatemala grows coffee and that just now there is a slump in coffee-plantations he anticipates and is able to circumvent a four-page lecture on the laws of modern supply and demand, and hurries forward to a description of Antiguan churches. Here, at last, Mr. Huxley shows his quality; for he is writing of something he has actually *seen*.

Such visual passages are always excellent. It is not that Mr. Huxley is a writer for whom the sensuous world does not exist, or for whom it is but a pale shadow when compared with the world of speculation and theory. His senses, if he cares to employ them, are extremely acute; he enjoys physical beauty; he has a keen, positively voluptuous, appreciation of painting, music and architecture; and it is vastly to be regretted that the warning notice which he imagines posted up by the Time Spirit among the ruins of the ancient Guatemalan capital: *No Musing, by Order* should not have been improved on for his benefit. *No Generalisations, under pain of death* should be written large on every site he happens to explore.

Not all Mr. Huxley's generalisations, however, are as irrelevant to the subject in hand as his forty-page essay on the evils of nationalism, provoked by a glimpse of the overgrown Guatemalan army. His remarks on Mayan art are persuasive and interesting:

> One can only speculate (he writes) about the causes which made their culture what it was. My own conviction is that its distinguishing peculiarities were due to such personal accidents as the birth, in a favoured social position, of exceptional individuals. To what cause, for example, must we attribute that obsessive preoccupation with time, which is such a striking feature of Central American culture? Other agricultural communities have not found it necessary to work out elaborate calendars or to devise an intellectual instrument for thinking back into remotest antiquity. There was nothing, therefore, in their economic development that made it inevitable for the Mayas to invent the Great Cycle and establish dates many thousands of years removed from their own position in time. . . . We must postulate the appearance among the Maya priesthood of one man, or a succession of men, haunted by the consciousness of the perpetual perishing of things and congenitally equipped to deal with this obsession in mathematical terms. . . . Once the practice of calendar-making became established, it would be as "natural" for all succeeding Maya priests to bother their heads with problems of time as it was "natural" for the Greeks of Herodotus' day not to bother theirs.

This, at any rate, is original and to the point. More hazardous is Mr. Huxley's assertion that "there are no artistic or inartistic races"; since, although it is quite possible that every culture is initiated by a group of specially favoured individuals, there is no doubt that, whereas among some races a culture dies easily and quickly, there are others—for instance, the Japanese, even at their most philistine—from whose life a sense of beauty is extraordinarily hard to dislodge.

As an art-critic, Mr. Huxley is at his best. From Guatemala City he went to Antigua, there to study the ruins of Colonial magnificence, and thence travelled north and west, to Oaxaca, Mitla and Mexico City, taking in such ancient sites as Copan and Chichicastenango on his way. As the book progresses, Mr. Huxley falls back less and less frequently on the position of the dispassionate and hyper-cultivated observer, hermetically imprisoned behind the library-windows of a well-stocked and spacious intelligence, and is content to see and feel and record his feelings. It may be that, in reviewing the earlier sections of his book, I have allowed an undue emphasis to its more facile and journalistic side. Mr. Huxley is seldom altogether dull, though it must be admitted that he is often irritating; and, at his dullest, we cannot forget that he is a born writer. PETER QUENNELL

Everywhere you go

YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL

PRIESTLEY: ENGLISH JOURNEY

¶ J. B. PRIESTLEY set out last Autumn on a tour of England in order to discover for himself just how English people of every sort were living. The present book is the result.

¶ Under one aspect it is an entrancing book—packed with delightful character-sketches of the people he met, beautiful descriptions of the English scene, & humorous accounts of English customs & institutions. It is instinct at once with an intense love of England, & with a deep human sympathy which goes beyond the boundaries of country or race.

¶ Three quotations from reviews will suffice to support our opinion: "*A thrilling tour with an incomparable guide—shrewd, witty, human, candid & revealing*"—The Editor (Daily Herald). "*It is full of amusing characters, unexpected happenings, shrewd, humorous & racy comments*"—Sylvia Lynd (Harper's Bazaar). "*It gives a fair & rounded picture of contemporary England which no other writer has equalled: its people & its landscape, its towns & country . . .*"—Howard Spring (Evening Standard).

¶ But under another aspect the book is a tragic & terrible one. We are not committing Mr. Priestley to any political view (he writes as an observer, not a sociologist) when we say there has appeared in our time no comparable exposure of the hell to which the modern phase of Capitalism has condemned so many of our people. It is this side of the book which we wish particularly to bring to the attention of readers of the "New Statesman": for it is a book to stir again our own tired consciences, & one to have constantly by us as ammunition with which to attack the easy lies of those who say "*Things are not really so bad.*"

¶ We have before us 41 typed pages of short extracts from the reviews; & we choose from them, in support of the last paragraph, the statement of a man as familiar to readers of the "New Statesman" for his good sense & moderation as for his hatred of unfairness & oppression. Robert Lynd writes in the "News Chronicle": "*It may well have a powerful political effect on the life of the country. It brings home to the imagination the shameful condition in which millions of the English people are now living & so prepares the mind for heroic remedies.*"

¶ We wish to end with the words of the President of Magdalen in "The Book Society News": "*I consider its publication a national event, & shall be surprised & disappointed if it does not find its way in the next six months into the hands of every thinking reader in this country . . . It is an English classic, & its subject is not only the England we live in but the better England that must come.*"

HEINEMANN · GOLLANCZ

ALL JUST OUT:

WHAT MARX REALLY MEANT

BY G. D. H. COLE, 5/-

The author has here attempted, not merely to give an outline of what Marx said, but to look objectively at the world of today & to evaluate its problems by a method based on that of Marx, but making full allowance for the vast changes which have arisen since Marx's day in the structure of Society. He does not discard Marx's analysis, but rather looks at the objective world as Marx himself might have looked at it if he had been alive today.

"*There would be much less nonsense talked about Marx, even by British statesmen, if one could make certain that they would try to master this very effective piece of popular analysis*"—Prof. Laski (Manchester Guardian).

"*In many respects the best book he has given us for years. Mr. Cole offers a reinterpretation of Marx in the terms of the present day, & as such his book must be admitted to be of the greatest value*"—New Britain.

PROPERTY OR PEACE?

BY H. N. BRAILSFORD, 5/-

"Mr. Brailsford's 'War of Steel & Gold' has rightly become one of the classic studies of pre-war Imperialism. His new volume is pretty certain to take a similar rank as an account of the post-war world. It is a brilliant analysis, done with the pungency of style & the mastery of material that we expect from him, of the forces that are pushing our civilisation to the very edge of the abyss. Mr. Brailsford surveys the whole scene. The breakdown of democracy, the failure of the League, the consequences of economic Imperialism—all are surveyed with an insight into the significant factors which it would be difficult to over praise"—*Prof. Laski (Manchester Guardian).*

ATLAS OF CURRENT AFFAIRS

BY J. F. HORRABIN, 3/6

"What astonishes me is that nobody thought of it before. With this 'Guide to Key Facts & Key Places' in his possession, no ordinary person need be at a loss when he is confronted in his newspaper with the news of the day about the world of today. The maps are masterpieces of direct simplicity by a master map-maker; & the summary descriptions in the letterpress are equally lucid & to the point. Mr. Horrabin in my opinion has achieved a brilliant success in the extraordinarily difficult task of presenting the chief international problems of the age in a nutshell & at a glance. As a humble student of affairs I shall certainly keep his book always within reach of my hand"—*A. J. Cummings (Political Editor of the News Chronicle).*

"I have spent half the morning poring over the admirable & fascinating 'Atlas of Current Affairs' you have kindly sent me. The idea is an extraordinarily good one, & it is equally well carried out. Both maps and literature are just what one wants. Almost every page contains or implies some interesting fact which I did not know, & ought to have known. It ought to have an *enormous* sale, & not only in schools; for it ought to be within arm's reach of every intelligent person every time he reads his newspaper"—*D. C. Somervell (Chief History Master at Tonbridge).*

GOLLANCZ 14 HENRIETTA STREET COVENT GARDEN

NEW NOVELS

The Grandmother. By MARGARET MASTERMAN. *Nicholson and Watson.* 7s. 6d.

The Green Scamander. By MAUDE MEAGHER. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

This Way to Heaven. By CARADOC EVANS. *Rich and Cowan.* 7s. 6d.

Wedding Song. By DAVID BURNHAM. *Davies.* 7s. 6d.

People who say, sometimes outright but more often indirectly, that they read in order to be taken out of themselves imply that known things are dreary, that only experiences remote from their own and "anywhere out of the world" which is theirs will provide them with entertainment. They are well provided for: the flow of blue lagoons, the blossoming of scarlet pimpernels, the manufacture of green hats is unceasing. But some of us like the familiar embodied in literature, when perceived with a fresh eye, and relish seeing problems, relationships, circumstances very like our own described, provided that they are illuminated by the writer's intelligence and point of view and harmonised by that order which art imposes on its raw material. For such people it will be a pleasure to turn from books about persecuted Germans, about Russians with too much work and Englishmen with too little, and settle down to examine the bourgeois Roberts family under the guidance of Miss Masterman, their creator.

The Roberts live genteelly on the edge of poverty, but with memories of wealth and a large house, hovering between Nonconformity and the Church of England, scraping to send Kitty (who is "good at" science) to college, or at least the polytechnic, having their relatives to stay, and bickering a good deal. It sounds very much more dreary than it is; actually *The Grandmother* is at times a very amusing book. Miss Masterman has nice narrative style, and is not in the least patronising about her characters. Her sympathy with Miss Roberts, the middle-aged woman who is house-keeper-slave-companion to her maddening octogenarian mother, is extreme, and has produced an acute character-study. Miss Roberts is the kind of sturdy, untidy, individualistic woman whom foreigners consider typically English; devoted to her niece Kitty, her religion, and her abhorred duty, she is profoundly and quite unselfconsciously realistic:

> Such words or phrases as . . . "So-and-so is not a lady," or "That's morbid," . . . in Miss Roberts' mouth and combined with her usual apt, direct, unflowery style, seemed strangely unworthy of her. She used them because she so little realised her own shrewdness, and had so little confidence in her own descriptive powers, that every now and then from sheer modesty, she felt inarticulate, and would describe what she felt in somebody else's phrases, which were usually inconsistent with her own personal, and in many ways emancipated, view of life.

It is a pleasant change to read a novel in which the old are not extolled at the expense of the middle-aged, as others besides Mrs. Rea and Miss Sackville-West have extolled them; indeed, the reader's identification with Miss Roberts is incomplete only in that, when the old lady at last dies, one heaves a sigh of relief instead of sharing the daughter's perfectly natural shock. It is interesting to compare *The Grandmother* with another recent novel, *The Old Man Dies*; they might rank as companion-pieces on that theme beloved of the English, family life. Whereas Miss Sprigge's family of Rushbrooks is much ramified, so that we learn about the love-affairs, conflicts and natures of a crowd of people of all ages, Miss Masterman confines herself within narrow limits; and as for love—that, except for the romantic elderly doctor's idealistic attraction towards Kitty, is suppressed altogether. She relies for keeping our attention, and succeeds, upon acute observation and tart yet kindly description of what a superficial view would regard as the most commonplace domestic interior. We hardly stir, because Miss Roberts, except to shop, hardly stirred, outside No. 45 Lindisfarne Road; yet we are not wearied. Or only very rarely: just now and then the quarrelsome conversations pall; they are almost photographically trite. A more guarded use of dialogue would have been more effective; of exposition there is not a line too much.

No one could complain of *The Green Scamander* that it does not take the reader far enough in time and space, for it deals with the Amazons and their expedition to help in the defence of Troy. But those who are attracted by adjectival colours in the titles of novels must be warned that, despite its warlike subject, this is not a full-blooded romance. Miss Meagher's manner is straightforward, unadorned; and yet there is a recurrent tinge of *Well of Loneliness* sentiment in the portrait of Queen Penthesilea, with "her lean brown legs," her hatred of masculine love, her jealous affection for her young co-queen Camilla. She reminds one irresistibly of gym-mistresses and female golf-champions, with their self-conscious stride, and squaring of elbows at meals. It does not seem probable that the Amazons so closely resembled Waacs and Wrens; at all events, they should not be written of in such a way that the queen saying: "Themiscyra; drive slowly" to her charioteer reminds us of an aunt saying "Home, James" to her chauffeur. Miss Meagher's was the dilemma always besetting the historical novelist—how to avoid both the outworn "What ho, without there!" convention and the "Bring them to life—they were just like us" convention. The alternative is to draw a thin veil over everything, to steep it in an atmosphere which removes it from comparison with this, or any other, era. George Moore drew his thin veil; Miss Waddell attempts to draw her rich one. Miss Meagher relied on getting away with it on sheer simplicity, on the sheer interest she felt in her material. But such simplicity demands the most perfect tact and taste, and her touch, alas, is often ingenuous and indiscreet:

> Priam regarded her with some curiosity. "Are your women devoid of the natural inclinations of your sex?" "No, sir. But they are too healthily busy with other activities to be abnormally obsessed by their inclinations. Short of treason, I feel no interest in that side of their lives."

"That side of their lives." O Penthesilea!

Nevertheless, there is a great deal to be said for simplicity when genius is wanting. In *The Green Scamander* it is an element presenting no resistance to the swimmer—he glides along. Mr. Evans' simplicity is of another kind—elaborate, sarcastic, quasi-biblical. On the first page, we learn of the orphanage boys Jasper and Ben that "soon after their birth were the brands plucked and christened names that would make them duteous to their masters and about the age of fourteen were they delivered into shops and warehouses." Later, this simplicity is adulterated with tropes, the meaning becomes occasionally obscure, and when we are told that "Who so dwells in the hogcote of sloth and corruption neither embroiders the fleshmonger's trade nor weaves it into an entertaining fable," Mr. Evans seems to be following the revivalists and "Thankgodders" whom he attacks and using high-sounding but empty patter. Yet weave an entertaining fable he does; that even against the current the swimmer presses on. *This Way to Heaven* is a morality. The world into which Jasper and Ben are thrown is one of almost unrelieved hypocrisy, degradation, slime and self-seeking. It is as if the writer had a grievance against the world and was determined to hear no defence. To show that it is not only money-grubbers and psalm-singers whom he wishes to castigate, he gives his county-court judge "eyes treacherous as an elephant's and lips as contemptuous as a camel's." Nobody *shall* be good, or even moderately agreeable. This *parti pris* makes the fable more like the Hall of Mirrors at a Fun Fair than a well in which, peering, we might spy a glimpse of truth; and truth is what we legitimately look for, since it is the novelist's business.

The publishers point out that Mr. Burnham resembles Mr. Hemingway; they call it being a dangerous rival; I should call it being a younger writer quite properly influenced by some eminent living novelist; for Mr. Faulkner's touch also is detectable (e.g., page 35), and the treatment of the relationship between Americans and foreign families into which they have married owes more to Miss Kay Boyle than to Henry James. The story is complicated and entails some Shakespearian coincidence; it is told in the first person, sometimes by Kit Abbot, sometimes by his sister Narcissa. The scene is Venice. Narcissa is married to an unfaithful Italian prince; they are heavily in debt and are trying with Kit's help to raise the wind on the New York stock market. In this they are foiled by Kit's and Narcissa's financier father, with whom Kit has been since early childhood at enmity. We are shown in throwbacks, by Narcissa *à la* Faulkner, how the enmity arose and culminated in Kit being forbidden the house. He is now, at thirty, still pursuing his revenge. His plan for bringing their father to his financial knees entails the collaboration of the rich Englishman Blunt, and Blunt is bribed by being betrothed to Narcissa's young sister-in-law, Bice. This is the situation when *Wedding Song* opens, and it takes some understanding, because Mr. Burnham, faced with the novelist's frightful problem of how to begin, plunges in the fashionable manner which is so bewildering to the reader. But once the reader has discovered who is who and (with the exception of the enigmatic Blunt) who is having a love-affair with whom, he is constrained to continue

so terse and well-balanced is the narrative, so able and often witty the dialogue. The characterisation is, as usual with the Hemingway school, relatively unimportant, but it is adequate—the sweet and stupid Narcissa emerges the most clearly.

About the middle of the book, which is not long and extremely well printed, an important question arises. Mr. Burnham surrounds Kit with a halo of romance by making him a widower through the death of his girl-wife in childbirth, while he was at the war. The question is, is Kit intended to be a fine, sensitive fellow unlucky in his parents, or a neurotic, "abnormally obsessed," as Miss Meagher's Amazonian queen would say, by an infantile relation to his father from which he has never emancipated himself? It is an important question, because we are dealing with a novelist of considerable talent. I fear that Mr. Burnham admires his hero; for in the scene where, having finally beaten his father at their financial games (which I do not pretend to understand), Kit gives him back the cheque he has just exacted, it seems that Mr. Burnham records with approval a manoeuvre which struck me as childishly melodramatic, self-consciously noble. Nor were my doubts about Kit's mental balance soothed by his prolonging his revenge, even after this official settlement of debts, by arranging to be found in a compromising situation with his new step-mother. In this way is brought about the gloriously unhappy ending required by Mr. Burnham's youthful and rather sentimental cynicism. It is here, at the end, though not altogether unwarned, that the reader finds himself in the realm of green hats. There is only a thin line between the kingdoms of Faulkner and Arlen; Mr. Faulkner remains on his own side owing to his fidelity to his own private truth. Mr. Burnham has not yet discovered his own private truth—not yet learned to be completely himself. When he does so, he will have at his disposal the accomplished technique which makes *Wedding Song* a pleasure to write about, a stimulating piece of story-telling to read. E. B. C. JONES

A STUDY IN CONTACT

An African People in the Twentieth Century. By L. P. MAIR. *Routledge.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The African People of whom Dr. Mair writes are the Baganda, of whom Johnston with his remarkable prevision said that they were the Japanese of Africa. For they have the same mental alertness, the same inquiring disposition, τὸ φιλομαθές, the anxiety to discover and to appropriate, which has made the modern culture of Japan something distinctively its own and not a palimpsest of the Occident and Orient. "Baganda," as Dr. Mair concludes, "remains an African society which has incorporated the foreign elements into itself and has not simply been swamped by them." They exhibited the same adaptability some four hundred years ago, when their neighbours were swamped by an immigrant Hamitic culture, and they give every evidence of repeating their achievements to-day.

As long ago as 1909 Roscoe published his monumental volume on the Baganda, and though the methods of anthropology have changed since his day it still remains a masterpiece of detailed observation and description. Without it Dr. Mair could not have produced in nine months this extremely valuable study of contact and change, and it is pleasant to read her generous tribute to the work of her predecessor. She does not, as some other anthropologists have done, assume that because her findings do not accord with the earlier version therefore the earlier version must be wrong, but makes allowances for the changes which are inevitable in any dynamic culture and, what is still rarer, is prepared to admit that she is not herself fully informed on details which were available to the older writer. "I feel sure that some of my informants knew of this," she writes in allusion to a statement in Roscoe's book, "but none would admit it." She criticises where she feels that criticism is necessary, but with a courtesy which, even when the criticism does not appear to be well founded, compels our admiration for her gentleness and restraint. In one respect, indeed, Dr. Mair has made Roscoe's book even more valuable than it was, for her own book must be regarded as an indispensable supplement to the former. She has applied the modern technique of anthropology to her study of the Baganda, with the result that, though we turn to Roscoe for the details of custom and ritual, we must read this volume to realise how vital and integrated a culture it really was. Her account brings the Baganda to life: Roscoe's, however useful, was

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static and uninspired. The changes which it was Dr. Mair's chief purpose to study have often served to show the hidden meaning of ceremonials which Roscoe described without perceiving their social relevance. A sense of humour and the author's identification of herself with her subject have contributed to this happy result: she is not aloof and detached: the Baganda are not specimens on a slide but living people with whom she has been intimately associated and of whom she writes simply and unaffectedly, and for that reason the more convincingly.

It would be an admirable thing if the more important anthropological documents could be rewritten by a different hand every twenty or thirty years, for such a method would present a study of cultural change and adaptation which would be an invaluable aid to our contacts with the simpler peoples. It is fortunate, therefore, that so powerful a precedent has been set by Dr. Mair, as I have no hesitation in saying that this is one of the most important essays in practical anthropology that has yet appeared in print. A few errors of detail have crept in, some of which could have been avoided by reference to official publications; the date of the Malaki movement, for instance, and the number of cattle in the possession of the Baganda, which is seriously underestimated, and the suggestion of military conscription. And it seems a pity that Dr. Mair should use the Polynesian word *taro* throughout for a vegetable with a very wide provenance in Africa. But, these minor blemishes excepted, I have nothing but praise for a work which is a pioneer in the sense that for the first time it illustrates the importance of anthropology as a handmaiden to intelligent government, an axiom often accepted, indeed, but rarely accorded more than lip-service.

A brief summary of the changes which Dr. Mair has observed would be unfair to her very lucid presentation and would not give a clear picture of this very significant example of cultural adaptation. For one thing the process is still going on and evolution has not taken place at a uniform rate in all directions. Consequently it would be possible by deliberate selection to demonstrate symptoms of degeneration, which are in point of fact but isolated phenomena of transition having little reference to the major processes of an integrated culture. One might notice, for example, an apparent decay in morality, in breeding and good manners, and an increasing desire for personal aggrandisement and ostentation, but such insistence would be as wide of the mark, in the general scheme of cultural evolution, as would be too intent a preoccupation with only those symptoms which are significant of favourable adjustments to a new situation. The general trend, however, is clear, and it is for the reader to discover from Dr. Mair's book the nature of the less important, though no less significant, vagaries. The cumulative effect of the changes which have taken place is largely in the direction of an emphasised individualism. This may be seen in every aspect of life and conduct. Wealth means a different thing from what it did in the past: values have altered: currency has shattered old standards (though, be it observed, the most efficacious way of dealing with a laggard debtor is still through his father's ghost): many old crafts have died out, but others have acquired a new commercial significance: the economic unit of society has changed: and the character of land tenure has developed traits undreamt of fifty, even twenty, years ago. New obligations are defined by law: duties of service have been commuted for payments: economic rents have accompanied individual possession, and even the problem of absentee landlordism has arisen, involving new adjustments which the Baganda appear to be making slowly, painfully indeed, but with the sureness of a vital culture. And with this evolution away from the old collectivist order we may observe, too, a change in the social status of the individual, which depends no longer on his relation to the other members of the community but on the fact that he becomes a wage-earner and a taxpayer at an early age. His status is no longer comparative, in terms of the old African social structure, but personal and independent. There is less integration of activities, therefore, possibly a freer individual life and added personal responsibilities.

It is too early to say what the final effect of these changes will be, and in any case no moral judgment is involved in the presentation of Dr. Mair's invaluable document. She analyses these changes and gives the reason for the cultural trends in a single community, but there is no reason to anticipate that other African communities will develop along the same lines. Their future depends not only on our handling of them but as much on their own past; and it is just this analysis which is so extremely important as indicating the kind of interaction which we must expect between African and Western institutions. The moral must be drawn by ourselves, for Dr. Mair is too discreet to go beyond the scientific limits of observation and analysis which she has set herself. Her book does, however, stand as a triumphant vindication of genuine Indirect Rule. J. H. DRIBERG

"GRACE ABOUNDING"

Enjoying Pictures. By CLIVE BELL. *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Clive Bell has always had the courage of his opinions. Unlike many writers on art, he never emits an uncertain sound, he never shelters behind a non-committal statement. It is partly due to this extreme frankness that he is extremely readable. His vivid personality is always before us. These qualities are indeed more marked in the present work than in anything which he has hitherto written. He sets out to tell us about his own enjoyment of pictures and in consequence he tells us almost more about himself than about the pictures he discusses. In doing so, his frankness is at times almost embarrassing. He makes us feel almost too clearly how much his reactions may be conditioned by circumstances which have little to do with the critical estimates at stake. It is only so, I think, that we can account for some of his more surprising statements both of approval and contempt. Only by assuming a condition of great euphoria can I, at least, explain how Mr. Bell came to have the authentic aesthetic thrill before Zaganelli's *Baptism* in the National Gallery.

But whatever the causes of his likes and dislikes they are sharply divided. There are no intermediate shades between black and white. His critical outlook resembles a painting by Caravaggio in which bright light and deepest shade share the whole design. As an instance of how he will load his shadows one may cite a grand onslaught on the painters of the high Renaissance or rather those of Venice. Approving of Tiepolo because, although he liked the world in fancy-dress "it was for the world in fancy dress and not for grand generalisations about it that (he) felt (his) delicate sentiments. But for what did the heroes of the high Renaissance, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese (you will not forget that I had just come from Venice), care? Of course, they cared for what they saw. . . . But what they saw they carried to some far chamber of the mind wings and storeys removed from the original fact, and there, from tepidescent experiences, concocted their generalisations—attitudes and gestures and grimaces symbolising love, hate, dignity, impudence, despair, surprise, wisdom, truth, justice and all the rest of the Graeco-Roman sculptor's or the film producer's stock."

This is an astonishing statement. First of all, Tiepolo is more rhetorical than Veronese, whose excitement about the purely visual values often leads him to neglect the dramatic implications of his theme entirely. There is a little martyrdom of a female saint at Florence in which the executioner sticks a knife into the lady's unfeeling breast with more absent-minded casualness than one would begin to cut a cake with. There is another in the Brera of the *Three Marys at the Tomb*, where the figures "register" no more emotion than if they had come to see a grotto during a garden party. But though in these pictures Veronese shows himself indifferent to his subject, he is very far from feeling cold or indifferent to its visual implications. The astonishing *trouvaille* of colour should alone be sufficient to prove how deeply he was concerned. Can it be that Mr. Bell finds the fancy-dress of Tiepolo's world more stimulating and provocative than the rather heavy sumptuosity of Veronese's? If so, he has travelled far indeed from "significant form." But to accuse Titian of "concocting generalisations from tepidescent experiences"—Titian with his intense and glowing sensuality, his vivid feeling for characteristic types, his impassioned discovery of new aspects of appearance—to accuse him of this tempts me to accuse Mr. Bell of concocting generalisations without having the patience to test their validity.

But perhaps Mr. Bell would scarcely approve of those laborious, patient comparisons and versions of experiences by which less inspired critics endeavour to arrive at a more objective appreciation of the great masters, for he is, in æsthetic matters, a convinced Calvinist. Everything depends on "Grace"—either you have Grace or you have not. Almost certainly you have not, for the vast majority of mankind is aesthetically damned, and damned not for want of opportunity or good-will, but by predestination. And, if you are damned, nothing will avail; good works are useless—culture, however intense, will only bring you within "a thousand miles" of true understanding. If, of course, you have Grace all is well, and there is no need for the slow,

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laborious methods of good works, since everyone, he tells us, is born either a sheep or a goat. It is a hard doctrine which might almost seem to make criticism superfluous, but Mr. Bell carries it with a light heart and very un-Calvinist high spirits, dealing his blows right and left with a freedom that borders on recklessness. I am quite certain, for instance, that he did not mean to accuse Lord Conway of Allington of bribing me to say that two pictures of his were early works by Giorgione, but that is in effect what his words imply. Let me assure him that no money transaction took place and that the reasons by which I arrived at this conclusion were neither so simple nor so ridiculous as he thinks. But one of the charms of Mr. Bell's criticism lies in the unexpectedness of his opinions. We never quite know where he will turn up. Thus, after devoting a good part of his book to rather wild generalisations and a little disputable "kunstforschung" he suddenly gives us a chapter on Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican which is full of good sense, coloured by a warm and sincere admiration, and marked by genuine critical understanding. It is perhaps the best piece of critical writing which he has ever done and certainly brings us into closer contact with the real quality of the work than ever before. And it is not only appreciative but discriminating for in his account of the *Defeat of Attila* his distinction between the parts where Raphael still shows his genuine personal inspiration and those where he has fallen into rhetoric is convincing.

One wonders why he left out the *Expulsion of Heliodorus*—no doubt the rhetorical tendency has already begun, but it is none the less one of the greatest masterpieces of design, certainly far more of a "discovery" than the *Incendio* to which Mr. Bell devotes some attention. Here, by the by, there is more of the "Graeco-Roman sculptor's stock in trade" than in any of Titian's works. But I would not be carping over Mr. Bell's appreciation of Raphael which reassures a confidence in him rather rudely shaken by the first half of his book. After all, however little we may be tempted to share some of Mr. Clive Bell's more hasty reactions there is something disarming in the extreme frankness with which he makes them known. There is more to be got from these records than from many attempts to construct a logical aesthetic system.

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LUTHER

Martin Luther. By BRIAN LUNN. *Nicholson and Watson.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

It would be a nice paradox for the casuist to maintain, that courage is more meritorious than virtue because it has no assurance of reward but only a richly speculative hope of it. A sober accounting would probably show that courage more often sounds in sorrow than success. Still, there is no denying that it has its lucky moments, and Mr. Brian Lunn may have hit one of them. He has undertaken (God help him, for he won't escape some knocks) to write and discuss the life of the most controversial man of the last thousand years, to do it as a frank hero-worshipper, yet with consideration for those who sniff brimstone at the very mention of Martin Luther's name.

Luther's character and career combine to form one of the major curiosities of history. Even Mr. Lunn, with all his acuteness, sympathy and learning, cannot account for it. In Roman eyes Luther is the arch-schismatic—the man, *non habens ante oculos timorem Dei, sed suadente Diabolo*, who deliberately rent the seamless garment of the Redeemer. To the Puritan he is one who, though vouchsafed a measure of grace, never entered into the full light of the Gospel. In the *Burschen* tradition, he lives as the burly, jovial Saxon, *echt Deutsch*, bursting with the heartier virtues, who genially excommunicated all who should deny any member of the holy trinity of wine, woman and song. All these pictures are false, but they enshrine facts about Luther that are genuine enough. Luther does stand in Western history as the arch-schismatic. If the outcome of the Diet of Worms had been, as it very nearly was, his arrest and death at the stake, there would have been no Reformation as we now understand the term. The very word Protestant would never have been coined. Calvin, if he had emerged at all, would be remembered only as the leader of an obscure and probably short-lived sect of Swiss fanatics. Only Luther was capable of making the revolt from Rome a European movement. On the other hand, though he constantly found himself doing radical things, there was never a man less radical in temperament. He never leaped before he came to the stile, but when he came to it he was usually a good leaper. Yet, even so, you could never quite count on him. There were some stiles—the notorious one was the doctrine of the Real Presence—at which he most obstinately baulked, throwing the whole Reformation cortège into confusion and bad temper. As for his personality, he was anything but the type of jovial parson. He was a constitutional melancholic, who turned to his glass, his wife and his lute for help in keeping the black Devil at bay. There is a curious and famous passage in one of his letters, which Mr. Lunn renders thus:

> And as often as the Devil vexes you with these thoughts, seek the conversation of men, drink more freely, joke and play the fool. It is often a good thing to joke and play the fool and even to commit some sin to the confusion of the Devil, so that we do not leave him any room to make trivialities a matter of conscience for us; for that's how he gets us down when we keep worrying lest we commit some sin. . . . For when the Devil says our sins have earned us death and hell, we must answer: I admit that I have earned death and hell. What about it? You think you can condemn me for eternity—not at all. I know One who has suffered for me and done satisfaction, and His name is Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Not perhaps a discreetly phrased utterance, and liable to be misunderstood. Yet the meaning is clear enough. Speaking as one who had only too good reason to know, Luther says that the Devil's most potent weapon is the poison cloud of despair; for despair leads to "accidie," and accidie, though it comes only fourth in the catalogue of deadly sins, is by far the deadliest. The man who regarded a preoccupation with God's eternal wrath as itself a sin could hardly be expected to march in step with those who regarded it as an essential preliminary to salvation. But there was an even deeper difference that separated him from men like Calvin. He was not a doctrinaire. It was only the logic of events that brought him to a definite break with Rome. With his early training as a lawyer, he was sensible of the value of the maxim *ut res magis valeat quam pereat*, but, unlike Erasmus, he would not allow it to be an overriding principle; and when at Worms he had to abandon it, he did so without a qualm. Whether he was right or wrong is a question that will be debated till the end of historic time.

Mr. Lunn handles his great topic with an enviable ease and judgment, and his style has the Gallic rather than the English quality—clarity with unaffected grace.

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Miss Sylvia Townsend Warner is an accomplished poet, but the fact that she shares this book with a new writer is neither an example of the helping hand nor a reflection upon the drastic economies which have taken place recently in the American publishing world. The two poets have shuffled their contributions for the bedevilment of critics and explain the experiment in a foreword :

> The authors believe that by issuing their independent work under one cover the element of contrast thus obtained will add to the pleasure of the reader ; by withholding individual attributions on the page they hope that some of the freshness of anonymity may be preserved. The book, therefore, is both an experiment in the presentation of poetry and a protest against that frame of mind which judges a poem by looking to see who wrote it.

The logic of poetry is very different from that of prose : for it proceeds by way of a hop, skip or a jump. This may explain why the poets, in their prose argument, fail to see the mundane flaws in their syllogism.

Perfect freshness, presumably, results from total anonymity, but the writers could scarcely be expected to take so drastic a course. They have not realised, however, that if the element of contrast is sufficiently striking and both contributors are highly individual in their style, the make-belief of anonymity cannot last very long. No doubt an idealistic impulse has driven both into protesting against the weak-mindedness of those who judge by names, as though an excellent sonnet or lyric, like a bank cheque, could only be honoured by a signature. Nevertheless, Miss Townsend Warner and her fellow-poet actually encourage this disgusting frame of mind, for they provide at the end of the book a four-column index of page-numbers and their respective initials. In fact they give poor human nature all the distracting material for a guessing competition complete with solutions. It is hard work to track down more than a hundred poems by cross-reference, but the reader will be tempted to test his own powers of literary detection, until, darting backwards and forwards from one end of the book to the other, he develops a crick in the neck.

General conclusions might be drawn from this engaging experiment in the correct presentation of poetry. But an immediate and particular result emerges, and it is a result which the experimentalists, despite their emergency index, may not have foreseen completely. It is difficult to tell with certainty the authorship of any given poem. I thought that I was sufficiently acquainted with Miss Townsend Warner's manner and could detect her neat turns and graces of phrase at once, but I was wrong. Here is the title poem, a pretty example of bubble-blowing :

> Whether a dove or a seagull lighted there
> I cannot tell,
> But on the field that is so green and bare
> A whiteness fell—
> And I must know before I go away
> If for to-day
> The weather of our love is wild or fair,
> Or ill or well.

That might have been written by Miss Warner, actually it is by Miss Ackland : and the example holds good throughout the book.

The obvious conclusion suggests itself that the new poet has been influenced by the more experienced poet, but mere pupilage is easy to detect. The hint in the foreword regarding the anonymous content of the lyric form affords a clue. Both poets are drinking from the same free fountain, both are travelling in the same public vehicle. Poetry resolves the particular into the general, and among those who have the same moods in common it is easier to note resemblances than differences. Both these poets can register delicately and with felicity those passing moods of our daily life which vanish like wind-arrows across water unless we have trained ourselves to capture them by immediate expression in diary or poem. But their experiment in the presentation of poetry is disconcerting. It reminds us how assiduous is that unseen collaborator in our best efforts—the great Anon.

AUSTIN CLARKE

MEMORIAL TO ELIA

Charles Lamb. Compiled by EDMUND BLUNDEN. *Hogarth Press.* 7s. 6d.

Charles Lamb. By ORLO WILLIAMS. *Duckworth.* 2s.

Mr. Blunden's Elia is very gentle, and his compilation another proof that contemporary opinion is long-lived ; for Lamb's personal tradition of heroic self-sacrifice, of admirable fortitude and forbearance, of extreme generosity, is not likely to be set aside even in an age that delights in debunking. It seems that, for once, a legend is true : no white-washers need apply : and the prying biographer of the modern school must leave behind him his tar and feathers. Is this because Lamb represents the ordinary man *in excelsis*—and *de nobis nil nisi bonum?* Or is it that, among so many brightly coloured figures, his own minute frame in its clerical black is lost sight of? Perhaps the truth lies somewhere between these suppositions. Much has been written and will continue to be written about the Romantic school. There is an atmosphere of Utopianism, of personal and impersonal liberty in its philosophy and in its poetry, that is now become an inspiration to a world that has lived to see those idealistic dreams vanish into thin air. We read and reread the saga of Shelley, and even attach an importance to the life of such a gaudy ruffian as Trelawny. Williams, a nonentity, is intimately coupled in our minds with the tragedy of Spezia ; and Byron's deformity—admittedly a psychological factor in the extravaganza of his life—has assumed an importance out of all proportion to its intrinsic significance. But what has Lamb to offer beside such a fructification of the picturesque? He was no poet ; his art, at its best, that of the copyist ; his political and private life orthodox ; his tragedy not that of an epoch but domestic. Yet, perhaps, it is for this very reason that, after the glamour and high lights of the great poets, we turn with relief to his steady common-sense and glory in the inconspicuous activities of the little accountant. After the stormy pilgrimage of Childe Harold we can the more readily enjoy with him the peaceful seclusion of his tattered library. It is the contrast that Lamb offers to his great contemporaries rather than his own merit which ensures him an honourable place among those immortals.

The charm of Lamb was not universally allowed by his acquaintance. Keats and his friend Brown were " devastated and excruciated with bad and repeated puns." Macready coldly notes as " an

A well-known journalist of our acquaintance has one rule for displayed typography—he invariably says—"I don't think we can do better than Grotesque."

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odd saying of Lamb's " that " the last breath he drew in he wished might be through a pipe and exhaled in a pun." The most thorough and complete criticism of Lamb, however, comes from that stern Caledonian, Carlyle :

> Charles Lamb I sincerely believe to be in some considerable degree insane. A more pitiful, rickety, gasping, staggering, stammering Tomfool I do not know. He is witty by denying truisms and abjuring good manners. His speech wriggles hither and thither with an incessant painful fluctuation, not an opinion in it, or a fact, or a phrase that you can thank him for, more like a convulsion fit than a natural systole and diastole. Besides, he is now a confirmed, shameless drunkard ; *asks* vehemently for gin and water in strangers' houses, tipples till he is utterly mad, and is not thrown out of doors because he is too much despised for taking such trouble with him.

And forty years later this brutal and inaccurate summary—when the dour Calvinist was in possession of the facts of Lamb's domestic life—is in no way qualified. When one considers the constant recurrence of Mary's insanity, his own brief incarceration in an asylum, the long and penurious slavery at the East India House, the constant changing of lodgings and all the inquisitive speculation and gossip which the history of the tragic couple inevitably raised in each temporary home—one is not surprised that Charles, of an evening, consoled himself with rather too much gin and water. Another reason for his excessive drinking is probably to be found in a pronounced stammer which made him unduly shy in company. But in any case his sin was venial ; and Carlyle's outburst reflects not on Lamb but on his own lack of sympathy and understanding. It may be dismissed as the ungenerous raving of a fanatic. If Carlyle had wished to criticise Lamb's manners he might justly have commiserated with the unlucky collector of stamps, who was abominably treated. But at the worst it is evident that Lamb in his cups was not always the gentle Elia.

This book is the first of a new series of biographies, to be compiled only from the opinions of contemporaries and from contemporary documents. I think that the term biography is here misused. We do not see the whole man. The finished portrait is not exhibited—only an illuminating portfolio of sketches from which the artist is to gather his material for the work itself. We can scarcely perceive, for instance, the strong link which binds Lamb to his age : an enthusiasm for antiquity. His reading was practically confined to the sixteenth century. Nor is there any hint here of the quality or substance of Lamb the artist. He was a great dramatic critic and, in a squeamish time, came bravely to the defence of Congreve and Wycherley. His essays are impregnated with his " discoveries "—and above all Sir Thomas Browne. His style is based on that of his master ; but in such an extract as that which follows (from *The Praise of Chimney-sweepers*) there is something more than mere virtuosity.

> The premature apprenticements of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine and almost infantile abductions ; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for), plainly hint at some forced adoptions ; many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact ; the tales of fairy spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations*.

While the volume under review must be of great interest to students, the general reader, for the reasons given above, will judge it to be incomplete ; and will rightly consider it a source-book for a biography—and not a biography—of Lamb.

Mr. Williams' *Life* has been written for the series of " Great Lives " published by Messrs. Duckworth. Here is the orthodox Lamb, sensible and eccentric in turn—the boy-man of his own essay. The size of the book has not allowed much space for quotation ; but, as a biography, it is more than just useful even if it is a little too concise. Mr. Williams is a sound critic of Lamb's work, and makes a good point when he writes that the genuine Lamb is to be found even more in his letters than in his essays. These two books, read together, make a worthy memorial to Elia.

RICHARD STRACHEY

THE CAMBRIDGESHIRES

The Cambridgeshires, 1914-1919. By Brigadier-General E. RIDDELL, C.M.G., D.S.O. and Colonel M. C. CLAYTON, D.S.O., D.L. *Bowes and Bowes.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The story of the Cambridgeshires is the story of the war in France and Flanders as it was experienced by thousands of non-professional soldiers, men who, in the words of the authors, were not " fire eaters " but civilians, the vast majority of whom had never touched a rifle before 1914, but who came forward against the greatest military machine the world has ever known.

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None should be better qualified to write their history than the authors of this book. Both commanded the battalion with distinction, General Riddell from June, 1915, to September, 1916, and Colonel Clayton, who went out with it in 1915, assumed command in August, 1918. Both enjoyed in full measure the confidence and esteem of those who served under them. In production and content the book stands high above the average run of regimental war histories. It is written in the form of a personal narrative—a series of graphic eye-witness accounts, each author having been responsible for the chapters dealing with events which had come within his personal experience or direction. Each tells the story in his own characteristic manner, drawing freely from a common store of humorous anecdotes and reminiscences, each writes with a shrewd and kindly insight into the psychology of the war-time soldier with his prejudices, his loyalties, his naive superstitions, his sometimes macabre sense of humour and his seemingly inexhaustible reserve of physical endurance and courage under appalling conditions.

The greater part of the book is necessarily devoted to detailed accounts of operations in which the battalion was actively engaged. These descriptions of the actual fighting will convey an intensely realistic impression of the real thing and will call up recollections perhaps intolerably vivid.

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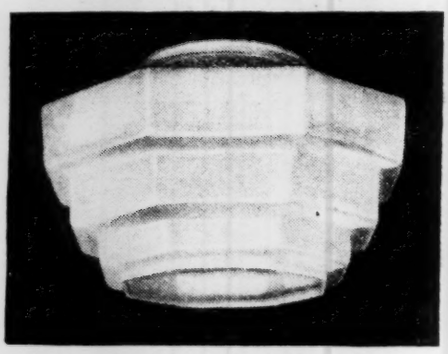

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DUBLIN versus THE TATE

Hugh Lane and His Pictures. By T. BODKIN. *Harrap.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This is a reprint of the limited edition published in 1932. In the first few chapters the author gives some account of Lane and his activities, which is not very interesting because Lane was not a very interesting person. He was a typical "gentleman dealer" with, as may be inferred from his dealings, a dealer's flair and dealer's taste. He seems to have acquired—I judge from what I have seen—a few masterpieces (e.g. *Les Parapluies*, *Le duc d'Orléans*), a fair number of second-rate works by modern masters, many showy but inferior pieces by good or great painters (Corot's *Summer Morning* and the dubious Rembrandt at Dublin), a quantity of bad, meretricious, more or less contemporary stuff by painters of the kind in which dealers delight (e.g. Diaz, Mancini, Maris, Stevens), and a sprinkling of palpable frauds. What he bought he sold brilliantly or bestowed judiciously.

The greater part of the book is devoted to a restatement of the already well stated case for the return to Dublin of what is known as "the conditional gift," i.e., the Lane pictures in the Tate Gallery. Of these thirty-nine works not more than half a dozen are worth wrangling about; the rest being either bad pictures by bad painters or disappointing ones by good. In the controversy there is something to be said on either side. The legal right of the English to retain the pictures is indisputable. More impressive is the argument that they had better remain in London where they can and will be seen by amateurs from all the world over. Against this Dublin maintains, cogently in my opinion, that poor Irish students who cannot afford to travel have no opportunity of seeing first-rate modern art, whereas the Tate, after ceding the Lane pictures, would still be quite well off: to say nothing of the superb Courtauld pictures being accessible to anyone in London who wishes to see them. Probably the happiest solution would be some comprehensive international arrangement for lending pictures, by which the Lane collection, the Irish contribution, would become a drop in the communal pool. But the prevalent mood in Europe and America of acrid nationalism seems to make such a solution more improbable than ever.

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Thank You, Jeeves. By P. G. WODEHOUSE. *Jenkins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Superior persons have made Mr. Wodehouse's art the subject of their sneers and the reason is fairly clear: he gives pleasure to the low-brow and is to be ranked with all the odious crew that perform the same despicable service. Moreover, Mr. Wodehouse's puppets are drawn from a milieu of the idlest rich which these severely ethical critics disapprove. But Mr. Wodehouse is an artist whose extremely limited range of subject and of character are his most interesting features. Like that supreme virtuoso, the late Little Tich, his art consists in variations upon very limited themes, and our first crude guffaws give place to an aesthetic appreciation of his formal arrangements. *Thank You, Jeeves*, possibly because it is his latest turn, seems to be one of his very best. Every combination of, for example, Bertie Wooster and the mental specialist, both with blacked faces, and the homicidal lunatic complete with carving knife, is worked out, and there is a delightfully *Charley's Aunt* flavour about the whole book.

Autobiography of a Bird-Lover. By FRANK M. CHAPMAN. *Appleton.* 15*s.*

Dr. Chapman, Curator of Birds in the American Museum of Natural History, is an outstanding authority on his subject, and in his present book he tells us how he came while still in his youth to desert banking for ornithology, and, joyfully accepting a salary which must have seemed a mere pittance, to devote the rest of his life to the study of birds. It must be admitted that in the autobiography we hear more of the collector than the watcher, for much of Dr. Chapman's early life as an ornithologist was spent in travel in search of specimens for his museum, which, thanks to the enthusiasm of himself and his colleagues, now possesses one of the richest collections of birds in existence. To a great extent, consequently, the autobiography resolves itself into a book of travel with a scientific purpose, the latter bringing the author into touch with the world's most famous ornithologists. Hence the number of amiable character sketches with which the pages are studded. Not the least interesting of the chapters are those in which Dr. Chapman writes of this country and his friends here, notably of Lord Grey, to whom he pays homage as the ideal lover of birds. The book is well and profusely illustrated.

John Galsworthy. By HERMON OULD. *Chapman and Hall.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Ould claims that during his ten years' friendship with Galsworthy he came to know him, though "he was notoriously difficult to know"; and he holds that the Galsworthy he knew "is perfectly revealed by his books." "Perfectly" is a considerable claim, but that from the novels and plays—notably from the plays—we may deduce a personality that resembles the author as his friends knew him there can be little question. It is the main interest of Mr. Ould's study that it traces Galsworthy's attitude to life as he revealed it in his works. Mr. Ould, indeed, has little to tell us personally that he cannot illustrate at once from some quoted passage, and as a revelation of Galsworthy the man, the book is as satisfying as it is ingenious. Of Galsworthy as craftsman, observer, and philosopher, Mr. Ould gives us a less convincing account; to his literary merits he is more than kind; to his literary faults more than a little blind. But as a bibliography of an author's character the book has everything to commend it.

Hidden Saria. By JOHN HALFORD. *Heritage.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Drums of Asia. By CHARLES TREVOR. *Lovat Dickson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The first of these two North-West Frontier novels belongs to a school of fiction which we believed to have flourished and had its decay just before the war. The author of *Hidden Saria* lacks the inventive touch of his master, Sir H. Rider Haggard, and much of his virile imagination—but his Stesilea is comparable to the immortal Ayesha. (We may even venture the criticism that the whole book owes rather more than is compatible with an original work to the author of the *She* saga.) The sophisticated reader will find much to amuse him in the extraordinarily naive "language" and comments of the three heroes. But one is too grateful for the pleasure which such books gave one as a boy to be highly critical—and there is a reminiscent flavour of magic and high adventure in *Hidden Saria* which makes it difficult to put the book down.

Drums of Asia is a very long story of conspiritorial activities in India: Mahomedans all over the world are to ally themselves with Germany in the event of a European war, and sweep the English out of India. (The Hindoo leader is conveniently in league with the Mahomedan.) How this plot is hatched, discovered and finally defeated is recorded in some 450 odd pages. There is far too much padding to interest "detective" readers, and the action of the book—in spite of some vivid scenes—takes rather too long to develop. Neither book can be seriously recommended to the adult reader.

Albert the Brave. By ANONYMOUS. *Hutchinson.* 6*s.*

This book originally appeared under the title of *Albert, King of the Belgians;* and has now been revised with the addition of a chapter giving a description of the recent tragedy. It is not so much a biography as a eulogy, and even Leopold, who was far from being an enlightened

A trouser leg-pull?

There was an interesting sequel to our "Backstraps to Turkey" advertisement which appeared here on March 17th. A letter came from Baghdad, by Air Mail (!) and read:

"I should be glad to know whether you hold the same views on

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as you do on backstraps."

Strongly suspecting, but not being quite sure, that this was a sort of trouser leg-pull, we replied cautiously but firmly in the negative, adding that side-straps are fixed when the wearer intends to use no other support for his trousers. The matter being obviously vital, we sent our reply also by Air Mail at a cost of 3½*d.*

* * *

On Easter Saturday one of us had to come in to get off an urgent order. A new customer arrived, said that he was on his way from the East to Canada, and wanted some clothes made by the following Wednesday. We had been recommended to him by his friend, Dr. Z. "But," we said, "we have no Dr. Z. on our books—we have a Mr. Z.—would that be your friend?" It wasn't, and our new customer couldn't understand it, as Dr. Z. had only recommended us the day before and was coming in himself very soon. Dr. Z. duly turned up and when we remarked that it was good of him to recommend Goss before himself trying us out, he said, "That's all right. I've read your advertisements!"

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BUMPUS

Professor J. E. NEALE

will give a Lecture on "Queen Elizabeth," at 5.30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 25th, in the Old Court House at Bumpus's.
Chairman: Lady Oxford Tickets - - 2/6
In Aid of the ELIZABETH LEVETT MEMORIAL FUND.

WILLIAM MORRIS, 1834-1896

A centenary Exhibition of books printed at the KELMSCOTT PRESS, together with examples of the early printing which Morris took as a model, and books from modern Private Presses, is now open.

Write for the Spring issue of Bookshop Notes on the new books.

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BOOKS

monarch, appears in a favourable light. But perhaps it is still too much to expect a sane and balanced account of a royal personage during his lifetime; and it must not be forgotten that this book was written while the late king was alive. In spite of its tone of adulation it serves as a useful guide to the events of Albert's life: and underneath the veneer of flattery can be discerned the characteristics of a humane and kindly man who lived and worked not only for the good of his people, but discovered a lively interest in the civilised world and acquired knowledge in the belief that knowledge was happiness. He hated ostentation and display, as numerous anecdotes prove; and his devotion during the war (with which the greater part of this book is concerned) earned him the gratitude and respect of his people and his allies. A less hysterical work would have served as a more worthy memorial to Albert the Brave.

Week-end Competitions

No. 214

Set by Philip Jordan

For good or ill England has just become a republic with strong nationalist tendencies which it feels no obligation to disguise in the new national anthem it has just commissioned from the usual successful mediocrity. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half-a-Guinea for three verses of that national anthem.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Queen St., W.C.2. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, April 27th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

A Week of Comfort

We would like you to enjoy a week of perfect shaving comfort; that is why we offer you a free trial sample which enables you to try for yourself and enjoy the comfort and efficiency of this new perfected beard softener. Because of its creamy lather the bristles are softened and the razor edge feels like a finger. Moreover, the antiseptic in Parke-Davis Shaving Cream ensures skin comfort and safeguards against infection. This scientifically-made cream makes life-long friends. Try the sample and shave well as well as comfortably all next week. Large tubes 1/6, from chemists only.

Experience will deny or confirm our claims. Write to Box 119/32, Euthymol, 50 Beak Street, London, W.1, for a free sample of this new shave-aid, made by the makers of Euthymol Tooth Paste.

RESULT OF COMPETITION 212

Set by Ernest Betts

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for "A Curse on Modern Times," not more than 200 words in length, similar to the curse ("for tying these knots") in *Tristram Shandy*. A Latin version is not essential.

Report by Ernest Betts

I had not supposed, until I read these entries, how vile was the age we live in, nor how fit to be cursed. All that we do and suffer seems damnable, and a good serviceable curse, such as you can hang up in the hall, is clearly something no house-holder should be without.

Most competitors missed the Shandean idiom which makes such a pretty thing of Dr. Slop's reading, but I realise the difficulty of cursing in style.

H. C. Riddell is Shandean enough but scarcely in a rage—"A feeble curse, quoth my brother Egbert, They are feeble times, quoth I." Too true to be good. Pibwob has: "May it (the Time) be cursed in its noise and its glare, in its speed and its blatancy, in its dress and its nudism, in its eyebrows and its lips and its nails, in its grids and its trams, in its yep and its O.K., in its press and its plays!" A goodly oath, but (looking closer) a shade too pibbly while lacking in downright wobbishness.

I should like to quote J. H. G. Gibbs, whose long final paragraph is admirable, and Redling, who curses everybody "in red shirt, black shirt, brown shirt, or in no shirt at all." "Southron's" curse is too pedestrian and has none of Sterne's bounding lightness of style.

Lester Ralph, who curses the times, whether "in Flying, in Speeding, in Record-breaking, in Broadcasting and in Community Singing," is good, and so is "Sycorax," but not unusually so, and I must mention the illustrious and, I believe, earliest of competitors, "Bow-Wow," who curses the "increased facilities for everything that doesn't matter," but is not so effective in the remainder of his test.

I award the First Prize to Eremita and the Second Prize to Olwen Lawton, whose version has a delightful ring of authenticity. Eremita is less Shandean but his is a full, rounded, noble curse such as the very angels could not escape, and he has taken the trouble to put it into Latin.

FIRST PRIZE.

In nomine Dei altithroni, Amen.

Maledictae sint omnes huius saecuti pestes. Maledicti sint cuncti fraudatores, diurnorum actorum scriptores, mystagogi, medici, dictatores: cum Beelzebub patre mendiciorum quâ vermis numquam moritur neque ignis extinguitur excruciari mereantur.

Maledicant illos omnes sancti innocentes, omnes beati pacifici atque humiles corde, illos gloriosus Apostolorum chorus, illos Martyrum candidatus maledicat exercitus.

Maledicta sint et huius aetatis foeda portenta. Maledicti sint scenae scenici artifices photographici, omnes qui cuius automatos nimis velociter agitant, vel qui barbaris musicorum organis abutantur.

Maledicam illos sancta Mater Dei semper virgo, sine peccato originali concepta, maledicant illos omnes sanctae virgines ac uduae. Sicut deficit fumus deficiant, sicut fluit cera a facie ignis sic pereant peccatores a facie dei.

Maledicti sint domi et foris, in pace et in bello, in prosperitate atque adversitate, in hora mortis et in die iudicii.

Maledicti sint ridendo, flendo, cantando, suspirendo, agendo, patiendo.

Sint ANATHEMA MARANATHA nunc et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

In the name of the Lord, throned above, Amen.

Cursed be the plagues of this age. Cursed be all deceivers, journalists, psycho-analysts, quack doctors, dictators: may they be tormented with Beelzebub, father of lies, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

May all the Holy Innocents, all blessed Peacemakers, and humble men of heart, curse them, the goodly Fellowship of Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, curse them.

Cursed be the foul portents of this age. Cursed be bright young people, film actors, rapid drivers, and players upon jazz instruments.

May the Holy Mother of God, ever virgin, conceived without original sin, curse them. May all holy virgins and widows curse them. May they vanish as smoke; as wax before fire, let them melt before the face of God.

May they be cursed at home and abroad, in peace and in war, in prosperity and adversity, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.

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NEW STATESMAN & NATION,
The Week-end Review,
10 Great Queen Street, W.C.2.

INCURABLES

£23,000 a year is necessary to support the 100 incurable patients at the British Home and Hospital for Incurables, Streatham, and the 300 pensioners dependent also on our charity. This money is largely subscribed by the many generous readers of our appeals. Though donations are small, their numbers are great. Will you also do your part? Donations gratefully acknowledged by Secretary, 73, Cheapside, E.C.2.

As pure as . . .

BEER

Many readers will be pulled up short by that unexpected comparison: as pure as . . . beer. Yet it is the simple fact that there is no article of food or drink produced with greater care and in greater purity than the beer of to-day. Nothing could be more conclusive than the evidence from witnesses of all shades of opinion before the Royal Commission on Licensing. Upon this point agreement was unanimous.

How purity is ensured

By analysing samples before purchase the brewers see to it that both the barley, from which the malt is made, and the hops, are of the choicest quality; and that any brewing sugar used is sugar in its most health-giving form. The whole process of brewing is under the close supervision of the Excise authorities, who record the materials of every brew. At frequent intervals tests are taken by the brewer of the beer in the making, and when the brew is completed an exhaustive test of the final beer is applied. Samples of the beer as sold are taken continually by the inspectors of the local authority. Are such elaborate and official precautions taken with any other article of food or with any other beverage?

Why beer is so wholesome

The result is that beer is brewed to-day of a soundness and a character that would have been impossible a hundred or even fifty years ago. For these elaborate safeguards have served not only to improve the materials, to secure their purity, and to ensure that nothing that is not pure is ever used; but also to improve immeasurably the whole technique of brewing.

Consider the excellence and the beneficence of beer's ingredients: malt, made from the finest barley, for digestion; hops for appetite; sugar for energy; yeast for vitality. Was there ever anything so downright wholesome as this mild, luxurious, and heartening beverage—British beer!

May they be cursed in laughing and weeping, in singing and sighing, in all they do or suffer.

May they be ANATHEMA MARANATHA, now and ever, Amen.

EREMITA

SECOND PRIZE

By the authority of the mighty Mussolini, the holy Hitler, the gracious Gandhi, and all other noble and all-powerful leaders of peoples, nations, parties, sects; political, religious, literary, artistic, philosophical, psychological, scholastic, military, domestic, musical, dramatic bodies and civil servants, may he (Everyman) be damned (for these modern times)!

May his machines, children of his brain, curse him! May all the cacophony of motors, trains, bells, horns, sirens, typewriters, telephones, bicycles, aeroplanes, drums, cymbals, saxophones, cinema organs, factory whistles, hooters, and all other noises, curse him!

May income tax collectors pursue him into eternity! May vile and deathly diseases shrivel all the members of his body!

May our poisons, bombs, torpedoes, gasses, machine guns, tanks and all other appurtenances of war, damn him! (Everyman, or whoever else had a hand in making these modern times)!

May he (Everyman) be damned in his home, office, tennis court, golf course, swimming pool, summer cruise, winter sports, theatre, cinema or any other place of work or amusement! May he be eternally unhappy and jobless! May his restless soul be damned unto Hell and live forever in the bloody fire!

May our mighty armies rise up against him, curse him and damn him (unless he follows us)! Amen, so be it. OLWEN LAWTON

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 69.—THE JONES BOYS

Last Christmas I was staying with the three Jones boys, Ivor, Evan, and David. The eldest, Ivor, had recently won a scholarship to the public school at which I teach.

I remembered their telling me, on a previous occasion when I spent Christmas with them, of the principle on which they were given money to spend on Christmas presents. "Daddy takes as a basis" (David, the youngest and brightest had explained), "the age of each of us in years. Then each of us has, to spend on the other two, that number of shillings which is the product of their two ages in years."

"And d'you still get money on that basis?" I asked them, this time.

"Oh yes," said David. "We had among us six pounds more this year than when you were staying with us last."

The boys were born in three consecutive Novembers. *How many years is it since I last stayed with them?*

PROBLEM 67.—LIVING CHESS

The positions are as follows:

At	Q.R. sq.	Mr. Queen,	At Q.R.2.	Belinda Bishop,
	Q.Kt. sq.	Mr. King,	Q.Kt.2	Bertie Bishop,
	Q.B. sq.	Mr. Rook,	Q.B.2.	Ralph Rook,
	Q. sq.	Mrs. Rook,	Q.2	Kathleen Knight,
	K. sq.	Mrs. Knight,	K.2.	Quentin Queen,
	K.B. sq.	Mr. Knight,	K.B.2.	Rachel Rook,
	K.Kt. sq.	Mr. Bishop,	K.Kt.2.	Kittie King,
	K.R. sq.	Mrs. Bishop,	K.R.2.	Kenneth Knight.

One or two competitors have claimed that there are too many clues. In my own analysis, I made use of all of them, but there may be some more economical line of approach. I should be grateful if those who find the data excessive would elaborate their argument.

PROBLEM 65.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to J. N. Beckett, 26 Oxford Mansions, W.1.

There were six correct solutions. *Ten* points are awarded.

PROBLEM 66.—HOT CROSS BUNS

A set of Low's cartoons goes to R. S. Biggs, 1 Gloucester Road, Leyton, E.10.

There were ninety-three correct solutions. *Five* points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the first sender of a correct solution.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points, a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150.

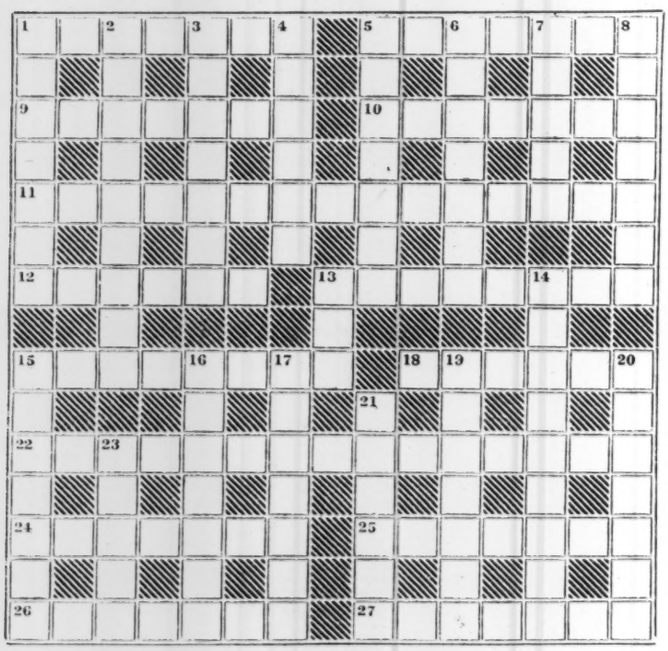
Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 215

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Queen Street, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

LAST WEEK'S WINNER

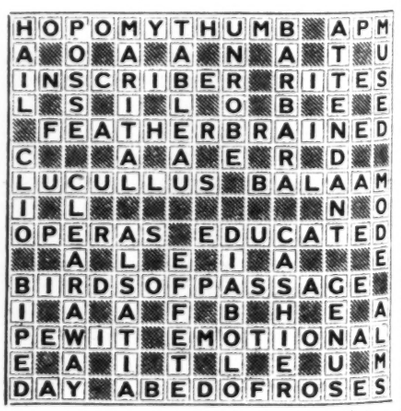
The winner of last week's crossword is Mr. Ernest Carr, Authors' Club, 2 Whitehall Court, S.W.1.

ACROSS

1. Pussyfoot not much use to a sailor.
5. A bit coloured on the edges.
9. God given forfeit.
10. Spinster's shield.
11. Artistic, not religious, endowment.
12. Hamlet fancied that one of the skulls might have belonged to him.
13. Red steak dressed like bacon.
15. Surely too fast a term for tortoiseshell.
18. To show he worked.
22. Lord Cromer.
24. In both sides of a disorderly rag.
25. Is it sympathy that supports this kind of table?
26. Literary school.
27. A woolly sounding poet.

DOWN

1. Afterthought of fishy origin.
2. The most famous beauty contest.
3. "What great ones do the less will — of."
4. "Then fled she to her inmost bower and there Unclasp'd the — eagles of her belt."
5. Fish.
6. Knave of diamonds and queen of spades.
7. Verbal indication of time.
8. Put up.
13. Add the past 7 and it will go up and down playfully.
14. One of these consulted the Big God Nqong.
15. John for a drink but William was heir to Longbourn.
16. Address this bird at the post office of a Dorset town.
17. It makes the South Coast.
19. Re this a rare nag.
20. It takes a Dutchman to be this.
21. Ancient aid for arithmeticians.
23. Ritual centre of ancient Rome.



London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

DRURY LANE. Three Sisters. Wed. & Sat.

DUCHESS. Laburnum Grove. Th. & Sat.

GLOBE. Double Door. Thurs. & Sat.

H'DROME. Mr. Whittington. Th. & Sat.

PICCADILLY. Counsellor-at-Law. Tu. & Fri.

QUEEN'S. The Old Folks at Home. W. & S.

ROYALTY. The Mask & the Face. Th. & Sat.

ST. JAMES'. Wed. & Sat.
The Late Christopher Bean.

S. MARTIN'S. The Wind & the Rain. M. Tu. F.

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Cast includes Nancy Hornsby, Martin Walker, Lawrence Baskcomb, and Beryl Measor.
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DRURY LANE. Evgs., 8.15. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
THREE SISTERS,
Music by Jerome Kern.
Book and Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein.

DUCHESS. (Tem. 8243.) 8.30. Mat., Th., Sat., 2.30.
EDMUND GWENN in a New Comedy
LABURNUM GROVE
by J. B. PRIESTLEY.

GLOBE, Shaftesbury Avenue. Gerrard 1592.
Evgs. 8.30. Matinees, Thurs. & Sats., at 2.30.
SYBIL THORNDIKE & OWEN NARES in
DOUBLE DOOR.
Transferring to Strand Theatre, Monday Next.

HIPPODROME. (Ger. 3272).
Evenings 8.30. Mats., Thurs, Sat., 2.30.
JACK BUCHANAN in
"MR. WHITTINGTON."
Elsie Randolph, Alfred Drayton, Fred Emney, K. Gibson.

PICCADILLY. 8.30. Tues., Fri., 2.30. Ger. 4506.
BARRY JACKSON presents
COUNSELLOR-AT-LAW,
by Elmer Rice.

QUEEN'S, Shaftesbury Avenue. Ger. 4517.
Evenings at 8.40. Mats., Weds. & Sats., 2.30.
MARIE TEMPEST in
THE OLD FOLKS AT HOME,
by H. M. Harwood.

ROYALTY (Ger. 7331). Evenings at 8.30.
Mats., THURS. and SAT. at 2.30.
NORMAN MACDERMOTT presents
THE MASK AND THE FACE,
with JEANNE DE CASALIS and FRANKLIN DYALL.

ST. JAMES'. Whitehall 3903.
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SATURDAY 28th 2.30, 4.30, 6.45 and 8.45 p.m.
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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.—Sunday, April 22nd, at 11 a.m. MRS. MARY AGNES HAMILTON: The Artist in the Socialist State. 6.30 p.m., Concert, Chamber Music.
Admission Free. Visitors welcome.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A Course of four Lectures on "THE ROOSEVELT LEGISLATION AND THE CONSTITUTION" will be given by PROF. FELIX FRANKFURTER (Byrne Professor of Administrative Law in Harvard University) at the London School of Economics (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2) on APRIL 25th, 30th, MAY 2nd and 7th at 5 p.m.
ADMISSION FREE WITHOUT TICKET.
S. J. WORSLEY,
Academic Registrar.

CONWAY MEMORIAL LECTURE. PROFESSOR H. LEVY will deliver the Twenty-fifth Lecture, entitled "SCIENCE IN AN IRRATIONAL SOCIETY," at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, on Wednesday, April 25th. Chair to be taken by Professor J. B. S. Haldane at 7 p.m. Admission free. Reserved seats, 1*s.* to be obtained from Conway Hall.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE CASANI SCHOOL OF BALLROOM DANCING, 90 Regent Street (Piccadilly Circus). Private Lessons daily, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., in all the latest ballroom dances. Guaranteed to teach you steps of any dance in THREE PRIVATE LESSONS, £1 1*s.* 0*d.* Practice Classes every Tuesday, 8.30 to 10.30 p.m., 3*s.* 'PHONE REGENT 4438–9.

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MISCELLANEOUS—continued

COMPANION wanted by young man on a tramping holiday in Pyrenees, Tyrol or Switzerland. May 19th to June 3rd. Box 481, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Queen St., London, W.C.2.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE BUDGET AND THE BULLS—GILT-EDGED STOCKS AND MOTORS —CENTRAL ELECTRICITY AND GALLOWAY

I HAVE no hesitation in acclaiming this Budget as the "Stockbrokers' Budget." Mr. Chamberlain may have little imagination, but he showed himself to be a market realist. The Budget was read in the City as an official endorsement of the level of prices both in the gilt-edged and industrial share markets. In the past week or two investors had been anxiously asking their stockbrokers about the possibility of a market reaction if 6*d.* did not come off the income tax. The "bulls" of British industrial shares were beginning to look a little scared. The average yield on the 144 industrial "equities" contained in the Actuaries' Investment Index had fallen to 3.53 per cent. against 4.25 per cent. a year ago. In other words, the market had handsomely discounted the continuance of the trade recovery. If there had been no reduction in direct taxation there would certainly have been profound disappointment and a rush to unload industrial securities. Mr. Chamberlain has now relieved us of all anxiety. He is in effect saying to the "bulls":—"Help yourself to shares; I support the 'bull' movement." There is no doubt that a plain cut in income tax is calculated to create a better psychological effect in the stock markets than any other form of tax reduction.

* * *

It is not, of course, a "prosperity" Budget in the technical sense. A "prosperity" Budget would have implied a much more optimistic estimating of the current year's revenues and 1*s.* would have come off the income tax instead of 6*d.* on the expectation that in the next two years the increasing yield of income tax from better trade would wipe out any deficit this year. To estimate only £4,000,000 more from customs, only £2.3 millions more from stamps, and nothing more from income tax, is to budget for a very meagre trade recovery. Indeed, political enemies will accuse Mr. Chamberlain of under-estimating on purpose—in order to have a handsome surplus to distribute in 1935-36—a year before the great elections. This under-estimating will, of course, please the gilt-edged market. Under one of the silliest laws of our land a Budget surplus goes automatically to reduce the dead weight burden of the debt. In other words, the supply of Treasury Bills will be further reduced this year, the joint stock banks will have to increase still further their holdings of gilt-edged securities and the market in British Government funds will rise to further heights.

* * *

The pretence which Mr. Chamberlain made of being very bold in maintaining the fixed debt charge at £224,000,000 and taking power again to borrow for the purpose of meeting the statutory Sinking Funds will deceive no one. He knows perfectly well that the statutory Sinking Funds will be provided out of revenue as they were last year (£7¾ millions). It seems incredible that when the National Government had the chance of reducing unemployment by the promotion of urgent capital works, such as housing, and the reconstruction of water supplies, it should have done nothing with its surpluses but reduce debt and bolster up the gilt-edged market. The following table is significant:

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC WORKS.

	Debt Reduction, 1932/33. In Millions.		Debt Reduction, 1933/34. In Millions.
Nominal total Sinking Fund	£17.24	Nominal total Sinking Fund	£7.75
Deduct:		Add:	
Budget Deficit ..	3.32	Revenue Surplus ..	34.45
Borrowing for Savings Certificates Interest .	2.66	Repayment of Borrowings of Unemployment Insurance Fund	8.31
Real Debt Reduction ..	11.26		50.51
		Deduct:	
		Capital withdrawn from War Loan Depreciation Fund	10.00
			40.51

(Figures of *The Economist*, which exclude payments to the U.S.A. on war debt account.)

The gilt-edged market acted discreetly on Wednesday, but it realises, I think, that Mr. Chamberlain has given it the biggest plum out of the Budget pie.

The reduction of 25 per cent. in the tax of £1 per horse-power on motor cars was the only market surprise of the Budget. If anyone should wonder why there is to be no reduction in the taxation on commercial motor vehicles, he should bear in mind that the Government is committed to support of the home railways. The object of the concession was to stimulate the export trade in private motor cars. But what about stimulating the import trade in high-powered American cars? Mr. Chamberlain has apparently swallowed the trade argument that exports had been hampered by the heavy horse-power tax levied in Great Britain. He suggests that the public will buy more and more cars just because they will pay 5*s.* less in the £1 of tax. But the average car buyer is probably motoring beyond his means, and will welcome the reduction in tax as a saving in his annual expenditure. The percentage of the domestic output of private motor cars absorbed by exports is only 18 per cent. There is little chance that the home manufacturer will be able to increase his output of higher-powered cars sufficiently to assist the export trade. More important than the British tax is the horse-power tax and the petrol tax now imposed in foreign countries. Increase in motor taxation abroad will do more to stimulate the export of British cars than any reduction in the British horse-power tax.

* * *

Ford Motor shares in any case are worth notice. The accounts of the company for the year ending December, 1933, showed earnings of 11.4 per cent. on the ordinary shares, or 4.6 per cent. if the profit on exchange is deducted. These profits were probably earned in the latter part of the year, so that in respect of 1934 shareholders may possibly see profits more than doubled. This explains the rise in the dividend-less £1 shares to 31*s.* 9*d.* from the low level of 15*s.* 3*d.* last year. The Austin Motor Company should also forge ahead in any trade expansion. This company earned 285½ per cent. on its ordinary shares last year, and paid a dividend of 100 per cent. Such is the high gearing of the Austin Motor "equity" capital that an increase of 20 per cent. in the 1933 trading profits means an increase of 74 per cent. in the profits available for the ordinary shares. The present market prices of the 20 per cent. Non-Cumulative Preferred Ordinary shares of 10*s.* each and the 5*s.* Ordinary shares are as follows:

Austin Motor	Price.	Yield.
20% Non. Cum. Prefd. Ordy. 10*s.* shares	29/3	£7 1 6
5*s.* Ordinary shares	94/6	£5 5 9 on 100% div.

* * *

The sixth Annual Report of the Central Electricity Board makes cheerful reading. The output of electricity from public supply systems in Great Britain showed an increase of 7 per cent. in 1932 and 10.7 per cent. in 1933, making comparison with the previous year in each case. For the period from 1929 to 1933 there has been an increase of under 5 per cent. in world output of electricity, but British output shows an increase of nearly 30 per cent. The rate of increase is still rising, for in March the consumption showed an advance of 19½ per cent. over March, 1933. At present the Central Electricity Board is still paying interest on its bonds out of capital, but it will please stockholders to learn that in the two areas in which the Board was trading on a normal basis throughout 1933, the income was sufficient to cover all expenses and leave a small credit balance. The present market prices and yields on certain of the Central Electricity Board stocks are shown in the final table, but attention is specially drawn to the Galloway Water Power 4 per cent. Debenture. This company has a contract with the Central Electricity Board for the sale of its output of electricity. The Board has covenanted with the Company to pay each year a sum sufficient to cover, after meeting all charges, the interest and sinking funds on the Galloway 5 per cent. and 4 per cent. debenture stocks. In other words, the service of the Galloway Debentures is a rent charge of the Central Electricity Board, and as such must rank ahead of the Central Electricity Board stocks.

	Price	Annual Yield %	Redemption Yield %
Central Electricity 4½%, 1957/82	111½	£4 1 6	£3 15 6
Central Electricity 3½%, 1963/93	99½ (free)	£3 11 0	£3 11 0
Galloway Water Power 4% Debentures, 1957/94 ..	104	£3 16 9	£3 15 0

The Galloway 4 per cent. ranks *pari passu* with the 5 per cent. debenture. Even if the company's dam were to burst the Central Electricity Board would still go on paying.

COMPANY MEETING.

IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES, LIMITED.

SATISFACTORY RESULTS OF YEAR'S OPERATIONS.

LARGE INCREASE IN PROFITS.

SIR HARRY McGOWAN'S SPEECH.

The Seventh Annual General Meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., was held on Thursday last at Central Hall, S.W.1.

Sir Harry McGowan, K.B.E., Chairman, before commencing his speech, referred to the deplorable accident at Billingham and extended to the bereaved and injured the sympathy of the directors. It was regrettable, he said, that, despite every precaution, such things did happen. Continuing, the Chairman said (in part):

At our meeting last year I had to tell you that the depression had continued through 1932. To-day we can say that 1933 was a year of moderate but general recovery. Broadly speaking, it has been noticeable that this improvement has generally been more marked in respect of internal trade. In bad times it is natural for every country to concentrate attention upon the stimulation of its home trade. Great Britain has followed this course and has, I think, been more successful than other countries, largely because we have been fortunate enough to enjoy stable political conditions. Taking the year as a whole, British export trade remained almost stationary, though there were welcome indications of a slight improvement during the second half year as compared with the first. We have it from the President of the Board of Trade that for 1933 Great Britain has a better record in manufactured exports than any other country.

Profits.

The net profits for the year, after providing £1,000,000 for the Central Obsolescence and Depreciation Fund and £662,340 for the Company's Income Tax, amount to £6,001,605, showing an increase of £1,272,533, or 27 per cent. over the preceding year. In judging this percentage increase you will no doubt recollect that our 1932 net profits were 38 per cent. above those of 1931. I am sure that you will be pleased with this record of improvement. It is still to be attributed to the three factors I mentioned last year, namely, an increased volume of business, the continuance of administrative economies and lower costs. It has been attained, notwithstanding our policy of passing on to our customers, in the form of lower selling prices, part of the economies that we achieve. You will also not forget that during the year we restored cuts in wages and also a substantial part of the reductions in salaries, which had been made two years earlier. Our income from holdings in Associated Companies, Marketable Investments and Government Securities, taken as a whole, showed a modest improvement in comparison with the preceding year, so that the greater part of the increase in profits is to be attributed to our own manufacturing activities. We have been fortunate in experiencing an increased demand for the products of our Manufacturing Groups. This represents a significant expression of the upward movement in industry as a whole during 1933.

We have made no alteration in our policy of fully maintaining all plants in a condition of highest efficiency, and including the charges for depreciation of wasting assets, minor services, etc., some £2,400,000, as recorded in the Annual Report, has been expended for this purpose. This is £175,000 more than last year's figures.

Bringing in the £543,770 from 1932, there is a balance of £6,545,375. The Directors have appropriated £1,000,000 to the General Reserve, or double the amount of last year, leaving a balance available of £5,545,375. The Preference Dividends were paid on the due dates and an Interim Ordinary Dividend of 2½ per cent. on the 1st December last. We now recommend a final dividend on the Ordinary Shares of 5 per cent., making 7½ per cent. for the year. The Deferred Shares, in accordance with the Articles of Association, rank for a dividend of 1 per cent. These total dividend payments absorb £4,979,236, leaving £566,139 to be carried forward, that is, £22,369 more than a year ago.

The rate of final dividend on the Ordinary Shares and the dividend on the Deferred Shares received, as you will appreciate, our anxious consideration. We have £1,272,533 more profits than last year at our disposal, of which we recommend that in round figures 60 per cent. should be distributed in the form of dividends and 40 per cent. placed to Reserve. We are confident that you will approve our action in so strengthening the Reserve position.

Balance Sheet.

We have also continued our policy of reviewing carefully the book value of the various manufacturing and other assets of the wholly-owned Subsidiary Companies, as a result of which we have decided, as stated in the Report, to apply £250,000 of the Central Obsolescence and Depreciation Fund and £750,000 of the General Reserve to writing off certain excess values of the Buildings, Plant and other assets.

I warned you last year that I was unable to say whether the process of adjustment of capital values was complete, but I think I can now forecast this necessity as a diminishing one. You will observe that this year our requirements are much lower than they were a year ago. Future years will, I hope, not impose too heavy a strain in this respect, but it is impossible to predict the redundances that may be caused by the discoveries of research, by the need for further concentration of manufacture, or by the erection of plants overseas.

The Central Obsolescence Fund has been drawn on to the extent of £250,000 and strengthened by the appropriation out of 1933 income of £1,000,000, so that the total of the Fund has moved up from £4,000,000 to £4,750,000. The balance of the Reserves in the books of the Subsidiary Companies for Obsolescence and Depreciation stood at the 31st December, 1933, at £3,063,603, so that our total Reserves for this purpose at that date amounted to £7,813,603. The General Reserve, which at the close of 1932 amounted to £9,500,000, has this year been increased by the excess of the appropriation of £1,000,000 out of 1933 profits over the £750,000 written off, and now stands at £9,750,000.

The market value of our Marketable Investments, or computed value in the case of unquoted Investments, at the 31st December, 1933, was £2,533,469 higher than the year before. After excluding the investment in a company which has now become a subsidiary through the acquisition of additional shares, the upward movement in prices which took place during 1933 restored to us £2,321,758, or approximately 67 per cent. of the fall existing at the beginning of the year. Since the date of the Balance Sheet, I am happy to say that there has been a further improvement, so that the £1,042,115 of depreciation on these Marketable Investments mentioned on Page 12 of the Report had on Monday, the 16th instant, shrunk to £293,440. Against this amount may, however, be set an appreciation over cost of £468,832 in respect of Government Securities so that we now have a net appreciation of £175,392. I think you will agree that this is a remarkable recovery, fully justifying the view that we have expressed to you for several years, namely, that market quotations did not necessarily reflect long term values.

Our cash resources have again increased. At the 31st December, 1933, the amount of cash in hand and invested in Government Securities amounted to £8,264,002. The increase of £1,187,733 over the preceding year has been attained notwithstanding the additional floating capital resources required by the larger volume of business we have done.

Our programme of capital expenditure during 1934 is heavier than usual, mainly because of the erection of the plant for the manufacture of Petrol from Coal. It may therefore be that at the close of 1934 our liquid resources in the form of cash and Government Securities will show some diminution. They will still be ample for all our purposes.

Home Expansion

Expenditure on new and additional plants during 1933 amounted to £1,312,000.

During the year we acquired, by means of an exchange of shares, the Chemical and Metallurgical Corporation, Limited, and its subsidiary, English Gelatine and Phosphates, Limited, and have bought a controlling interest in Croydon Mouldrite, Limited, the well-known manufacturers of Moulding Powders.

The British Titan Products Company, Limited, in which we are interested, has acquired land from us at Billingham upon which it is now erecting a plant for the manufacture of Titanium products. In the past these products have been imported from Germany. We have partly carried through, and shall shortly complete, a considerable concentration of our non-ferrous metal manufacturing activities. In the Explosives Group we have decided to embark upon a scheme of partial concentration at the Ardeer Factory, Ayrshire. During last summer the demand for our Drikold exceeded expectations. Our sales were nearly quadrupled.

Reference has already been made in the Report to the increased volume of sales of the Dyestuffs Group. We continue with satisfactory results to utilise our dyestuffs technique in the development of other organic products.

Overseas Markets.

As I have said, export trade during 1933 did not show the same improvement as the home trade. Yet it has been possible to identify some emergence from the depths of the slump. The continued low level of agricultural prices has been one chief retarding factor. Another is to be found in the many currency and exchange regulations, which have multiplied rather than diminished during the

(*Continued on page 622.*)